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LIFE OF CAMPESTRIS ULM THE OLDEST INHABITANT OF BOSTON COMMON

BY
JOSEPH HENRY CURTIS

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LIFE OF CAMPESTRIS ULM

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CAMPESTRIS ULM

In Summer Garb

LIFE OF

CAMPESTRIS ULM

THE OLDEST INHABITANT OF

BOSTON COMMON

By

JOSEPH HENRY CURTIS

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BOSTON
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TO THE
NOBLE, GENTLE TREE WHO
MORE THAN ALL THE TREES I HAVE KNOWN
HAS MOST
PROFOUNDLY INFLUENCED MY LIFE
THIS BRIEF AND INADEQUATE BIOGRAPHY
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR

M349768

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LIFE OF CAMPESTRIS ULM

THE OLDEST INHABITANT OF BOSTON COMMON

CAMPESTRIS ULM[1] belongs to an ancient and noble family whose history can be traced back into the mists of prehistoric times; they are natives of the middle and south of Europe, the west of Asia, and Barbary. Long before the advent of man they had made considerable advances in civilization, and there is a tradition in the family that it was mainly due to the envy excited by the sight of the progress that the Ulm had made in the breast of prehistoric man, before he had dropped his tail, and when it was uncertain which particular form of animal life would emerge on top, that started him on his conquering career, and gave him the impetus which so largely enabled him to dominate the world. Numerous allusions to the importance of the family are to be found in history, both ancient and modern. They were conspicuous in Persian gardens, according to Pliny and other Roman authors, and were well known by the Greeks, being among the trees in the Academus, or Public Garden, of Athens, according to Plutarch, where they had attained such extraordinary size that they were selected, with the Plane, to supply warlike engines in the Siege of Athens by Sylla, in the war with Mithridates. They were frequently mentioned by both Greek and Roman poets and writers in terms of praise, and groves of them were to be found in their cemeteries. By the Romans, suckers were usefully employed in supporting their vines. After the

[1] *U. campestris (field-loving). Alme; Aume-tree; common Elm. fl., perianth smaller than in U. montana; stamens often four; fr., usually obovate. 1.2 in. to 3 in. long, less cuspidate than in U. montana, often narrow at base, scabrid above and pubescent beneath, or nearly glabrous. Trunk attaining 20 ft. in girth, with rugged bark; root sending up abundant suckers. h., 125 ft. Europe (Britain).— Nicholson's Dictionary of Gardening, vol. iv., p. 120.*

Derivation. Ulmus is supposed to be derived from the Saxon word elm, or ulm; a name which is applied with very slight alterations to this tree, in all the dialects of the Celtic tongue. Ulm is still one of the German names for the elm; and the city of Ulm is said to derive its name from the great number of elm trees that are growing near it. There are above forty places in England, mentioned in the Doomsday-Book, which take their names from that of the elm; such as Barn Elms, Nine Elms, etc. Synonyms: Orme, Fr.; Ulm, or Rüster, Ger.; Olmo, Ital.— Arboretum et Fruticetum Britannicum, by J. C. Loudon, p. 1393.

decline of the Roman Empire, all through the Dark Ages, they were worthy companions of the monks, and assisted in keeping alive culture, art, and civilization among the barbarous nations they came in contact with and preserving them for the benefit of modern times. For centuries they have been the ornaments of avenues and public grounds in France, Spain, and the Low Countries, and were great favorites of Henry IV., being planted, at his request, by Sully, in cemeteries and promenades, many old trees alive in the time of the first French revolution being called Sully, Henri Quartre, or Rosni, after their illustrious sponsors.

They were first introduced into England by the Romans, and have since become universal favorites, ranking next to the oak in the affections of the people, and fitting companions of the nobility in all parts of that favored land, where they have attained their highest development, justifying their common name of English Elm. Many remarkable individuals are described by Loudon in his *Arboretum Britannicum*, and by Jacob George Strutt in his *Sylva Britannica*, who has given us many portraits of famous trees, and who thus describes the family, "as having a right, both with respect to beauty and utility, to claim a place next to the Oak in dignity and rank; it is peculiarly fitted for the length of colonnade with which our forefathers loved to make graceful and gradual entry to their hospitable halls, loving Society, yet averse from the crowd, delighting in fresh air, and in room to expand its roots, and affording its aid to all the weaker plants in its vicinity, that may seek its support, it presents a pleasing emblem of the class of country gentleman whose abode it is oftenest found to adorn and protect." Among others, he thus describes the Crawley Elm: —

The Crawley Elm stands in the village of Crawley, on the highroad from London to Brighton. It is a well-known object to all who are in the habit of travelling that way, and arrests the eye of the stranger at once by its tall and straight stem, which ascends to the height of seventy feet, and by the fantastic ruggedness of its widely-spreading roots. Its trunk is per-

CRAWLEY ELM

forated to the very top, measuring sixty-one feet in circumference at the ground, and thirty-five feet round the inside, at two feet from the base.

In former ages it would have constituted a fit retreat for a Druid, whence he might have dispensed his sacred oracles; or in later times for a hermit, who might have sat within the hollow stem with

"His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,"

and gazed on the stars as they passed over his head, without his reflections being disturbed by the intervention of a single outward object; but to the benevolent mind it gives rise to more pleasing ideas in its present state; lifting up its tranquil head over humble roofs, which it has sheltered from their foundation, and affording, in the projects and points around its base, an inexhaustible source of pleasure to the train of village children who cluster like bees around it; trying their infant strength and courage in climbing its mimic precipices, whilst their parents recall, in their pastimes, the feelings of their own childhood; when, like them, they disported under the same boughs. It is such associations as these that render a well-known and favorite tree an object that no art can imitate; no substitute replace. It seems to live with us, and for us; and he who can wantonly destroy the source of so much innocent, and indeed exalted gratification appears to commit an injury against a friend, which we find more difficult in forgiving than one against ourselves. It would be impossible to see such a noble tree as the Crawley Elm felled without regret; — its aged head brought prostrate to the ground, its still green branches despoiled in the dust, its spreading roots left bare and desolate. The old would miss it, as the object that brought back to them the recollections of their youth; the young would lament for it, as having hoped to talk of it when they should be old themselves. The traveller who had heard of its beauty would look for it in vain, to beguile him on the road; and the weary wanderer, returning to his long-left home, would scarcely know his paternal roof, when robbed of the shade of the branches which he had seen wave even before his cradle. A stately forest is one of the grandest sights in creation; an insulated tree one of the most beautiful. In the deep recesses of a wood an aged tree commands a veneration similar to that which we are early taught to feel towards the possessor of royalty, or the minister of religion; but in a hamlet, or on a green, we regard it with the gentler reverence due to a parent, or the affection inspired by the presence of a long-tried friend.

From Arboretum et Fruticetum Britannicum. *By J. C. Loudon.*
pp. 1379–80, 1381–82

Description, etc. The common English elm is, perhaps, more frequently to be found in the parks and pleasure-grounds of the English nobility and

gentry than any other tree, except the oak. It is of a tall, upright habit of growth, with a straight trunk, 4 ft. or 5 ft. in diameter when fully grown, and attaining the height of 60 ft. or 70 ft. or upwards. It has rather slender branches, which are densely clothed with small deep green leaves, somewhat shining on the upper surface, though rough to the touch. These leaves are broad in the middle, and contracted towards each end; being, like those of all the other species of elms, unequal at the base, and doubly dentated; and having a strongly marked midrib, with other equally prominent lateral ribs proceeding from it on each side. The colour of the flowers, which appear before the leaves, varies from a dark red to a dull purple. According to Evelyn, the common elm will produce a load of timber in about 40 years: it does not, however, cease growing, if planted in a favourable situation, neither too dry nor too moist, till it is 100 or 150 years old; and it will live several centuries. Young trees, in the climate of London, will attain the height of 25 ft. or 30 ft. in ten years, of which there are living proofs in the London Horticultural Society's Garden. According to Dr. Walker (*Nat. Hist.*, p. 72), the English elm, when planted beside the Scotch elm, grows much faster, and produces a greater quantity in the same space of time; though that timber is inferior in colour, hardness, and durability.

Geography. The small-leaved elm is a native of the middle and south of Europe, the west of Asia, and Barbary. In France and Spain, it is found in great abundance; and many botanists consider it a native of England. If not truly indigenous, it appears to have been introduced at a very early period, probably by the Romans, and to have been propagated by art; for, as Pliny observes, it seldom bears seeds to any considerable extent. According to Sir J. E. Smith, it is found wild in woods and hedges in the southern parts of England, particularly in the New Forest, Hampshire, and in Sussex and Norfolk. (See *Eng. Fl.*, ii., p. 20.)

History. The common field elm was known to the ancient Greeks, as it appears evident from Pliny mentioning that the Greeks had two distinct kinds, one inhabiting the mountains, and the other the plains. The Romans, Pliny adds, had four kinds: the mountain, or tall, elm (U'lmus Atinia, our U. campestris); the Gaulic elm; the elm of Italy, which had its leaves in tufts; and the wild elm. The elm was scarcely known, as an ornamental tree, in France, till the time of Francis I.; and it appears to have been first planted there to adorn public walks, about 1540. (See *Dist. des Eaux et Forets*, ii., p. 453.) It was afterwards planted largely, particularly in churchyards, by Sully, in the reign of Henry IV.; and, by desire of that king, who, according to Evelyn, expressed a wish to have all the highways in France planted with it, it soon became the tree most generally used for promenades and hedgerows. Many old trees existed at the period of the

first French revolution, which were called Sully or Rosni, and Henri Quatre; names that had been given to them apparently to commemorate their illustrious planters. Bosc states that he himself had seen some of these elms in Burgundy, with trunks from 4 ft. to 5 ft. in diameter, which, though hollow, yet supported heads capable of sheltering some thousands of men. In England, the elm has been planted from time immemorial; and, probably, from the era of the possession of the island by the Romans; though Dr. Walker supposes it to have been brought over at the time of the Crusades. The oldest trees on record are, perhaps, those of Mongewell, in Oxfordshire, which were celebrated in the time of Leland, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. There may, however, be much older trees; for the elm, being a tree of less national importance than the oak, has never possessed the same attractions for antiquaries. In Scotland, the English elm was hardly known before the union of the two kingdoms. Dr. Walker mentions it, in 1780, as being found nowhere in that country of a large size; but, as already mentioned, promising to afford a much greater quantity of wood than the Scotch elm in the same space of time. He particularises a tree planted in 1771, which, in 1799, was 35 ft. high. In Ireland, the narrow-leaved elm is said, in Mackay's *Flora Hibernica*, to be abundant, but scarcely indigenous; and no instances are given of large trees. In the middle and southern states of Germany, it attains a considerable size, as will be seen by our statistics of this tree in foreign countries.

As a picturesque tree, "the elm," Gilpin observes, "has not so distinct a character as either the oak or the ash. It partakes so much of the oak, that, when it is rough and old, it may easily, at a little distance, be mistaken for one; though the oak (I mean such an oak as is strongly marked with its peculiar character) can never be mistaken for the elm. This is certainly a defect in the elm; for strong characters are a great source of picturesque beauty. This defect, however, appears chiefly in the skeleton of the elm: in full foliage, its character is more marked. No tree is better adapted to receive grand masses of light. In this respect it is superior both to the oak and the ash. Nor is its foliage, shadowing as it is, of the heavy kind. Its leaves are small; and this gives it a natural lightness: it commonly hangs loosely, and is, in general, very picturesque. The elm naturally grows upright, and, when it meets with a soil it loves, rises higher than the generality of trees; and, after it has assumed the dignity and hoary roughness of age, few of its forest brethren (though, properly speaking, it is not a forester) excel it in grandeur and beauty. The elm is the first tree that salutes the early spring in its light and cheerful green; a tint which contrasts agreeably with the oak, whose early leaf has generally more of the olive cast. We see them sometimes in fine harmony together, about the end of April and the beginning of May. We often, also, see the elm planted

with the Scotch pine. In the spring, its light green is very discordant with the gloomy hue of its companion; but, as the year advances, the elm leaf takes a darker tint, and unites in harmony with the pine. In autumn, also, the yellow leaf of the elm mixes as kindly with the orange of the beech, the ochre of the oak, and many of the other fading hues of the wood." (*Gilpin's Forest Scenery*, vol. i., p. 43.) "The elm throws out a beautiful bloom, in the form of a spicated ball, about the bigness of a nutmeg, of a dark crimson colour. This bloom sometimes appears in such profusion as to thicken and enrich the spray exceedingly, even to the fulness almost of foliage." (*Ibid*, p. 114.) "The branch of the elm has neither the strength nor the various abrupt twistings of the oak; nor does it shoot so much in horizontal directions. Such, also, is the spray. (Fig. 1232.) It has a more regular appearance, not starting off at right angles, but forming its shoots more acutely with the parent branch; neither does the spray of the elm shoot, like the ash (Fig. 1046, on p. 1222), in regular pairs from the same knot, but in a kind of alternacy. It has generally, at first, a flat appearance; but, as one year's shoot is added to another, it has not strength to support itself; and, as the tree grows old, it often becomes pendent also, like the ash: whereas the toughness and strength of the oak enables it to stretch out its branches horizontally to the very last twig." (*Ibid*, p. 113.) As an ornamental tree, it is used, both in Britain and on the Continent, more especially in France and Holland, for planting in avenues, particularly in public walks. For this purpose it is well adapted from the comparative rapidity of its growth in any soil, the straightness of its trunk, the facility with which it bears lopping, the denseness of its foliage, its hardiness, and its longevity. It has also the great advantage of requiring very little pruning, or care of any kind, after it has once been planted. There are many fine avenues of elms in France, particularly those in the Champs Élysées and at Versailles; and in Holland, at the Hague. In England, the principal public elm avenues are in St. James's Park, and at Oxford and Cambridge; but there are also some very fine ones at gentlemen's seats, especially at White Knights, Littlecot Hall, and Strathfieldsaye.

Where the subject of this sketch was first exposed to light, who was his parent, and in what seminary and nursery the little seedling passed his early years, has never been disclosed by him, and probably never will be known. That he was no sucker and his parent a noble tree may confidently be maintained from all the characteristics of the offspring, for *sap is sap and sap will tell.* In all probability his early years as a seedling were passed in Old England and, like his kin of Pad-

JOHN AND MADAM HANCOCK

Courtesy of Neale & Company

docks mall, he crossed the ocean as a sapling and soon after took possession of the site where his lifework was to be performed, and which was destined to be of so much service to his adopted town and reflect so much credit upon himself. The date of his settlement upon Boston Common can be reasonably inferred, from the following application to the Selectmen made by his Excellency John Hancock, Esq., Oct. 26th, 1780, "for liberty to break ground near his seat for the pulling up of old trees and putting down others in their room. Liberty was accordingly granted, and Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Frazier were appointed a committee to view the bank near his House."

Fortunate little Campestris! Thrice fortunate, in your sponsors and in the site where you were placed, upon the slopes of Beacon Hill, in front of the mansion of John Hancock. The "Gleaner" has well said, "As long as America shall continue to hold a place among the nations of the Earth, the memory of John Hancock will endure." John Hancock was the gentleman, par excellence, of Boston town, well described by one of his successors, Governor Wolcott, as "a man of dignity of presence, fond of elaborate ceremonial, elegant in his attire, courtly in his manner, a man of education and great wealth for that time, a man who threw himself heart and soul into the patriotic duties of the hour."

Madam Hancock, his wife, before marriage Dorothy Quincy, was a lovely woman, well bred, refined, thoroughly feminine, elegant and fastidious in her dress, the lady par excellence of Boston town. They were just the picturesque and well mated couple to delight our little Ulm, as they passed and repassed, they equally pleased with the sight of the sapling, that gave every indication of developing in time into a noble, gentle tree.

On the opposite page is a copy of an unfinished likeness of Madam Hancock and John Hancock, by Copley, formerly owned by her great-niece, Mrs. Woodbury, wife of the late Judge L. Woodbury, of the United States Supreme Court.

"This is a full-length portrait of Madam Hancock, who is represented seated in an arm-chair, easily and naturally; gowned in one of those dainty, filmy, white cobwebs of India, so choice and costly at that day; a muslin of soft and clinging texture; with no ornament save a figured black lace fichu simply crossed over the bust. The face is marred[1] by a powdered, frizzed wig, low on the brow, a fashion not as becoming as her own dark tresses. The pose of the hand and arm is the same as in the smaller portrait.

"John Hancock, in a suit of brown velvet, stands at her side."[2]

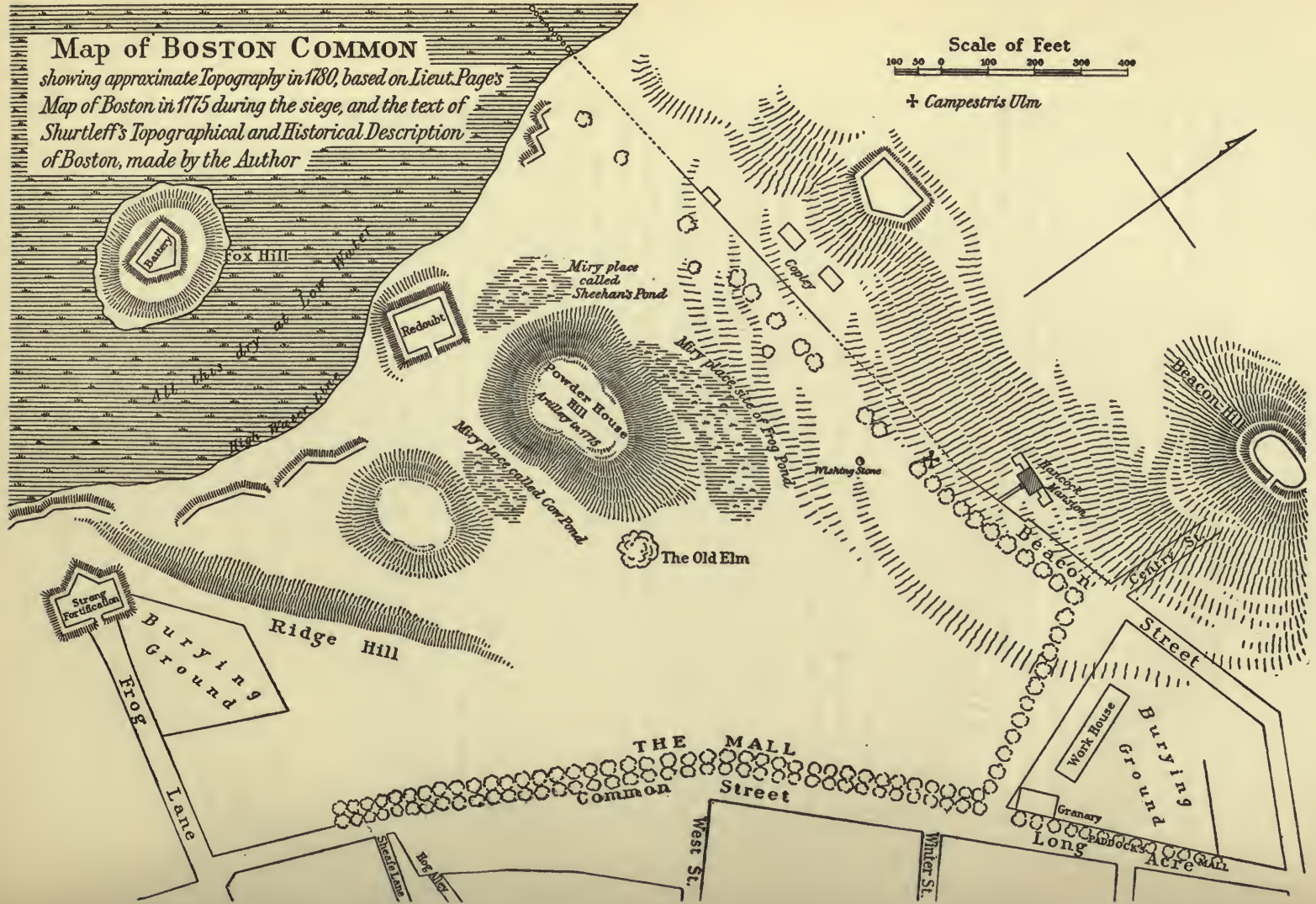
The virgin soil of Beacon Hill afforded in a pre-eminent degree what both Evelyn and Gilpin have described "as the delight of the elm;" viz., "gravelly, with a competent depth of loam, refreshed with springs," and our little Ulm, in the site where he was placed, overlooked in the foreground the Common, with its hills and valleys, and enjoyed a distant prospect of "smiling hills and laughing vales."

All the outdoor life of the Hancock Mansion was observed by our little Ulm, of much of which he was a part.

The surface of the Common was essentially the same as when Boston was first settled, and is shown by the accompanying map, based to some extent on that made by Lieutenant Page at the time of the siege, and modified and added to, according to the topographical description contained in *Shurtleff's History of Boston*. The three prominent hills, Powder House Hill, Ridge Hill, and Fox Hill, with the intervening valleys, varied the surface and added to the picturesqueness of the ground. Tremont Street mall was adorned with two rows of trees, and the northeast corner of the Common, along what is now Park Street and Beacon Street mall, was bordered with a line of trees in which our little Campestris was placed, where he could delight, as his name, "field loving," implies, in the view of the open pasture of the Common.

[1] *The Author disagrees with Miss Woodbury that the face is marred by the wig, and considers that a low brow is almost universally more becoming to a woman than a high brow.*

[2] *Dorothy Quincy, wife of John Hancock, by Ellen C. D. Q. Woodbury, p.* 146.


Map of BOSTON COMMON
showing approximate Topography in 1780, based on Lieut. Page's Map of Boston in 1775 during the siege, and the text of Shurtleff's Topographical and Historical Description of Boston, made by the Author
Scale of Feet
100 50 0 100 200 300 400
+ Campestris Ulm
Battery
Fox Hill
All this dry at Low Water
High Water Line
Redoubt
Miry place called Sheehan's Pond
Copley
Powder House Hill
Artillery in 1775
Miry place called Cow Pond
Miry place site of Frog Pond
Wishing Stone
Hancock Mansion
Beacon Hill
Beacon
Century St.
The Old Elm
Strong Fortification
Burying Ground
Ridge Hill
Frog Lane
THE MALL
Common Street
Street
Work House
Burying Ground
Granary
Long Acre
PADDOCK'S MALL
West St.
Winter St.
Sheafe Lane
Hog Alley

Life of Campestris Ulm

In 1780 four years had elapsed since the redcoats, styled by the newspapers of the day "lobsters and canabels," had cut down many trees and caused much damage to the Common during their occupation (though not to compare with the devastation of the "lobsters and canabels" of more recent times), and the selectmen had repaired much of it.

From EVELYN'S SILVA, *vol. i., pp.* 115-18, 126-29

Ulmus, the Elm. Of this there are four or five sorts, and, from the difference of the soil and air, divers spurious: Two of these kinds are most worth your culture, viz., the Vulgar, or Mountain Elm, which is taken to be the Oriptelea of Theophratus, being of a less jagged and smaller leaf; and the Vernacula, or French Elm, whose leaves are thicker and more florid, glabrous, and smooth, delighting in the lower and moister grounds, where they will sometimes rise to above an hundred feet in height, and a prodigious growth, in less than a person's age; myself having seen one planted by the hand of a Countess, living not long since, which was near twelve feet in compass; and of an height proportionable, notwithstanding the numerous progeny which grew under the shade of it, some whereof were at least a foot in diameter, that for want of being seasonably transplanted, must needs have hindered the procerity of their ample and indulgent mother.

For though both these sorts are raised of appendices or suckers, as anon we shall describe, yet this latter comes well from the *samera*, or seeds, and therefore I suppose it to be the ancient *Atinia;* for such an Elm they acknowledge to be raised of seeds, which, being ripe about the beginning of May, though frequently not till the following month, will produce them; as may be seen abundantly in the gardens of the Thuilleries, and that of Luxembourg, at Paris, where they usually sow themselves, and come up very thick.

The Elm delights in a sound, sweet, and fertile land, something more inclined to loamy moisture, and where good pasture is produced; though it will also prosper in the gravelly, provided there be a competent depth of mould, and be refreshed with springs; in defect of which, being planted on the surface of the ground, the swarth pared first away, and the earth stirred a foot deep or more, they will undoubtedly succeed; but in this trial, let the roots be handsomely spread, and covered a foot or more in height, and above all, firmly staked. This is practicable also for other trees, where the soil is over moist or unkind; for, as the Elm does not thrive in too dry, sandy, or hot grounds, no more will it abide the cold and spungy; but loves places that are competently fertile, or a little elevated from these annoyances, as we see in the mounds and casting up of ditches, upon whose

banks the female sort does more naturally delight. It seems to be so much more addicted to some places than to others, that I have frequently doubted whether it be a pure indigene or translatitious; and not only because I have hardly ever known any considerable woods of them, (besides some few nurseries near Cambridge, planted, I suppose, for store,) but most continually in tufts, hedge-rows, and mounds; and that Shropshire, and several other Counties, have rarely any growing in many miles together. In the meantime, some affirm they were first brought out of Lombardy, where indeed I have observed very goodly trees about the rich grounds, with Pines among them; for I hear of none either in Saxony or Denmark, nor in France, growing wild, who all came and preyed upon us after the Romans. But I leave this to the learned.

The Elm is, by reason of its aspiring and tapering growth, unless it be topped to enlarge the branches and make them spread low, the least offensive to corn and pasture-grounds; to both which, and the cattle, it affords a benign shade; defence, and agreeable ornament; but then, as to pastures, the wandering roots, (apt to infect the fields and grass with innumerable suckers,) and the leading mother-root, ought to be quite separated on that part, and the suckers eradicated: The like should be done where they are placed near walks of turf or gravel.

It should be planted as shallow as may be; for, as we noted, deep interring of roots is amongst the catholic mistakes, and this the greatest of which trees are obnoxious. Let new-planted Elms be kept moist by frequent refreshings upon some half-rotten fern, or litter, laid about the foot of the stem, the earth being a little stirred and depressed for the better reception and retention of the water.

Lastly, your plantations must, above all things, be carefully preserved from cattle, and the concussions of impetuous winds, till they are out of reach of the one, and sturdy enough to encounter the other.

There was a cloister of the right French Elm in the little garden near to her Majesty's, the Queen-mother's, chapel at Somerset-house, which were, I suppose, planted there by the industry of the S. F. Capuchines, that would have directed you to the incomparable use of this noble tree, for shade and delight, into whatever figure you will accustom them. I have myself procured some of them from Paris, but they were so abused in the transportation, that they all perished, save one which now flourishes with me: I have also lately graffed Elms, to a great improvement of their heads. Virgil tells us they will join in marriage with the Oak, and they would both be tried; and the success for such ligneous kinds will be the more probable, if you graff under the earth, upon or near the very root itself, which is likely to entertain the cion better than when more exposed, till it be well fixt, and have made some considerable progress.

The day before the application of his Excellency, John Hancock, to the selectmen, for a settlement for our little Ulm, the infant sovereign Commonwealth of Massachusetts was started on her career by the inauguration of John Hancock, as Governor, and the little Ulm and the little Commonwealth were destined to observe a good deal of each other from now on, and to become quite well acquainted.

Campestris, as soon as he was thoroughly settled, commenced to take notice of his surroundings. To the southeast was the noble mall with its double row of kindred elms, the outer row the gift of Jonathan Williams in 1728 and the inner row planted by the selectmen in 1734, with a fine footway between, where he observed the ladies and gentlemen promenading, enjoying the delightful shade, and inhaling the refreshing breezes, which came from the water; to the south were the Burying Ground and the path along the ridge, with remains of the intrenchments, which the British soldiers had thrown up during the siege, while nearer the centre of the Common was a Magnificent Tree, one of the well known family of Americana Elms, a distant connection of Campestris, graceful, well proportioned, and possessing a sturdiness and character of his own; he must have stood there before Blaxton's time, and was beloved by all the early settlers, and has afforded shade and shelter to many generations of their descendants. To the west, and close to the Old Elm, was the Powder House Hill, the most prominent elevation on the Common, while barely discernible in the distance was Fox Hill, a small low hill surrounded by an extensive marsh covered at high tide. On the north and immediately in front was the Mansion of his sponsor, John Hancock, described in the diary of Dorothy Dudley, as: "The magnificent house, standing as it does on the brow of the hill, commanding an extensive view of the country around, is typical of the prominence and exalted station of its owner, who has incurred the deadly displeasure of the royal Government, by reason of his determined patriotism. Massive stone walls, supporting a tiled roof, from which several dormer

windows look forth upon the town and its surroundings; projecting balcony over the front door, and broad stone steps and paved walk leading from the street. A grand drawing-room on the right, where hang the portraits of the Hancock family back to the days of the early Puritans; an immense dining-hall out of this designed for large companies; the family drawing-room to the left, and a small dining-room out of that; spacious halls and chambers elegantly furnished and hung with pictures of various kinds."

"The bedroom furniture and hangings were of gold-colored damask."

Adams writes that the best houses, in 1766, had "Turkey carpets, painted hangings, marble tables, and rich damask curtains and counterpanes to the bed," etc.

There was a garden, elaborately laid out, which ascended gradually behind the building to a charming hill in the rear; a large nursery and orchard full of many kinds of delicious fruit, and ornamental flower-beds bordered with box, some being of great size. From the summer house opens a capital prospect.

To the northeast was the summit of Beacon Hill, with Beacon and Centry Streets leading to it, while farther east were the Workhouse, Bridewell, and Granary with the kindred Elms of Paddocks mall beyond.

West of the Hancock Mansion were the houses of Copley stretching along the line of Beacon Street, which continued to the water's edge and was extended some distance out on the marshes by a boulder wall. Back of the houses of Copley were the slopes of Beacon Hill, mostly semi-wild land, covered with barberry and other bushes, and showing the remains of the fortifications of the redcoats during the siege, upon a mount whose name cannot be mentioned in circles polite.

All the life of the Common was daily exposed to the observation of our little Ulm; the cows chewing their cuds under the shade of the Old Elm or slaking their thirst in sultry weather in pools, or cooling their limbs in the mire of the ponds, while

the townspeople were crossing along by paths in all directions. But what interested Campestris more than anything else was a lovely boulder near by, covered with lichens and with a flat place on top: the famous Wishing Stone, described by Shurtleff in his *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston*, as follows: —

"In this connection the Wishing Stone, which can only be remembered by those whose heads have been whitened by more than fifty summers, should not be forgotten. It was situated just about where the path from Joy Street runs to the Great Tree, and was near the Beacon street mall. Its name implied the use to which it was formerly put. It has long since disappeared, removed probably by persons who were ignorant of its associations.

"It is astonishing how many people there are who have personal recollections associated with this old stone. When public convenience seemed to require new cross-paths in the Common, it was deemed necessary that the old rock, as it was called by those unacquainted with its history, should be removed from its ancient location. It was therefore blown to pieces by the usual process of blasting, and its fragments carried off, probably to be put to some ignoble use; and the two walks leading easterly from the northerly end of the long path, near the gingko tree, diverging the one to Winter Street, and the other to West Street, were widened and beautified with side trees; for the exact position of this noted stone was in the fork of the two paths. The young folks of by-gone days used to walk nine times around this stone, and then, standing or sitting upon it, silently make their wishes, which, in their opinion, were as sure to come to pass, if their mystic rites were properly performed, as were the predictions of the famous Lynn witch, Moll Pitcher, who flourished in the days of our grand-parents, and who died, as perhaps the credulous will be glad to know, at Lynn, on the ninth day of April, 1813, aged seventy-five, she being at the time the widow of Robert Pitcher, formerly a Lynn shoemaker."

Life of Campestris Ulm

Many a lark had Campestris watching the swains and maidens who resorted to this stone, mostly singly, and many a maid at early morn or dusky eve has been startled by the sound of the rustling of his leaves and a little wave of light, to find on looking round it was only little Camp. The situation, surrounding, and outlook of Campestris have been beautifully described in the following article taken from the *Massachusetts Magazine, or Monthly Museum* of July, 1789, and substantially true of 1780.

From The Massachusetts Magazine, or Monthly Museum, *July*, 1789

Description of the Seat of his Excellency John Hancock Esq., Boston, (illustrated by a plate giving a view of it from the Hay Market.)

His Excellency Governor Hancock's seat is situated upon an elevated ground fronting the South, and commands a most beautiful prospect. The principal building is of hewn stone, finished not altogether in the modern stile, nor yet in the ancient Gothic taste. It is raised about 12 ft. above the street, the ascent to which is through a neat flower garden, bordered with small trees; but these do not impede the full view of an elegant front, 56 ft. in breadth and terminating in two lofty stories. The East wing forms a noble and spacious Hall. The West wing is appropriated to domestic purposes. On the West of that is the coach house, and adjoining are the stables with other offices; the whole embracing an extent of 220 ft. Behind the mansion is a delightful garden, ascending gradually to a charming hill in the rear. This spot is handsomely laid out, embellished with glacis, and adorned with a variety of excellent fruit trees. From the Summer House opens a Capital prospect — West Boston and North part of the town — Charlestown — Cambridge — the Colleges — the Bridges over Charles and Mystic Rivers and all the country in the northern quarter to a great extent. The South and West views are not less enchanting, as they take in Roxbury and the famous Heights of Dorchester, the possession of which by General Washington, during the late war, compelled General Howe to evacuate Boston. The cultivated high lands of Brookline, and the rugged Blue Hills of Milton and Braintree, whose different appearance from the loftiness of their summits, serve as a thermometer to indicate the change of the weather, are also thrown upon the eye, together with innumerable farm houses, cultivated Villas, verdant fields, smiling hills, and laughing vales; whilst the gently undulating waters of Charles River, and

HANCOCK MANSION

Courtesy of the Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Company

the smooth surface of Dorchester flats, give variety to the whole. Upon the East those various islands which are interspersed in the harbor, from Castle William to the Light House engross the sight by turns, which at last is lost in the ocean, and only bounded by the horizon.

In front of this edifice is a large level green, called the Common, containing nearly 45 acres, where upwards of 100 cows daily feed. It is handsomely railed in except on the West, where it is marked by Charles River. The Mall, bordering the Common on the east, is ornamented with a treble range of trees, many of which afford a delightful shade. Hither the ladies and gentlemen resort, in Summer, and inhale those refreshing breezes which are wafted over the water. Upon days of election, and public festivity, the ground apparently teems with multitudes of every description and rank, who occupy themselves in various amusements. Also on this commodious lawn, the different military corps perform their stated exercise, all of which contribute to diversify those variegated scenes, that are continually presenting themselves to his Excellency's view.

The respected character who now enjoys this earthly paradise, inherited it from his worthy uncle, the Hon. Thomas Hancock, Esq., who selected the spot and completed the building, evincing a superiority of judgment and taste. In the time of that venerable gentleman, the doors of hospitality were opened to the stranger, the poor, and the distrest; and at every artillery election, after he was thus happily situated, he annually entertained, upon that day, the Governor, the Council, and most reputable personages, who previous to this, only tarried upon the field long enough to perform the ceremony of receiving and delivering commissions, and then retired. The same attentions are shown to this ancient military body, by the present possessor, who inherits all the virtues of his patriotic uncle, unequaled for politeness, urbanity, and true benevolence of soul.

In a word, if purity of air, extensive prosperity, elegance and convenience united, are allowed to have charms, this seat is scarcely surpassed by any in the Union. Here the blasts of Winter are checked by a range of hills, thrown in the back ground, which shelter the north and northwest from the inclement gale. There the mild Zephyrs of Spring are borne on the pinions of the South, and breathe salubrity in every breath; — on one side the flowery meads expand the party coloured robe of Summer; on the other, golden harvests luxuriantly decorate the distant field, and Autumn spreads her mantle, filled with richest crops. Now a silent river gently flows along delightful banks, tufted by rows of ancient elms, and now the wild wave, dashing to the sky, rolls its tempestuous billow from afar. Here glides the little skiff on the smooth surface of the polished stream, and there, the sons of commerce leave receding shores behind, and sweep across the liquid main.

Life of Campestris Ulm

"Me nec tam patiens Lacedæmon
Nec tam Lavissæ percussit campus opimæ
Quam domus Albuneæ resonantis
Et præceps Anio, et Tiburni lucus, et uda
Mobilibus pomaria rivis."

—*Horace.*

Volumes would be required to describe all the life of the most famous and hospitable Mansion that Boston has ever known, and the part played by our little Ulm, mostly in the background, as was becoming to a well bred, well behaved little tree.

Growing freely and thriving on the sound, sweet, and fertile soil of Beacon Hill, and refreshed with springs, specially adapted to his needs, our little Ulm rapidly developed from a Sapling into a tall, erect and vigorous type of Youth and Treehood and displayed his little bulk against the sky, admired by all passers by. It was a proud day when he was tall enough to peek over the wall of the garden and surprise Madam Hancock among her roses and hollyhocks with one of those little waves of light for which his kin are famous, and she graciously responded with a smile: his tufted shoots began to assume the character of entangled cords, especially enticing to ladies, and he soon began to put on the airs of a ladies' tree; but his time was so busily occupied watching all the life of the famous Mansion, and the Common as well, that he had little time for flirtation; to descend to the language of modern slang, there was something doing all the day, and a large part of the night, most of which he felt a keen interest in; his environment was just to his taste, and at this time of his life he fairly worshipped the ground he stood on.

He was specially pleased when the Governor chanced to pass his way, that fortunate man, honored by the proscription of King George the Third, and in the doggerel verse sung by his soldiers:

"As for their King, John Hancock,
And Adams, if they are taken,
Their heads for signs shall hang up high
Upon that hill called Beacon."

He in every way that was in his power endeavored to show his gratitude to his sponsor by waving his branches, rustling his leaves, reflecting little waves of light, and in numerous other ways trying to attract his attention, which the Governor would recognize in his usual gracious, dignified manner.

The Governor often wore a scarlet coat, with ruffles on his sleeves, which soon became the prevailing fashion; at other times he wore a heavy crimson Lyons velvet, which had been ordered from Paris for Madam Hancock but was decided to be entirely unsuited to her slender figure and was made into a coat for himself. His dress was always adopted quite as much to be ornamental as useful. When abroad, he wore a wig.

But the special delight of Campestris was when the Madam chanced to come under his observation, sometimes mounted on a pretty pony, with a light drab colored saddle cloth, highly embroidered, or when her coach drawn by four horses with two outriders, postilion, coachman, footman, servants in livery, and seven horses, drew up at the gate and Madam appeared at the door elegantly attired ready to enter; and if, as she passed down the paved walk to the gate, she stopped to admire the Lilac, especially when in blossom, Campestris became violently jealous and wondered what she could see worth noticing in that old bush.

The indoor life at the Mansion was almost as fascinating as the outdoor to Campestris, whose curiosity was excited, but who could only peek in at intervals through doors or windows.

Around his hospitable table all classes were gathered, from grave and dignified clergy down to the gifted in song, narrative, anecdote, and wit, with whom "noiseless falls the foot of Time, that only treads on flowers." At times the Governor, dressed in a red velvet cap and a blue damask gown lined with silk, a white stock, a white satin embroidered waistcoat, black satin small-clothes, white silk stockings, and red morocco slippers, was observed dispensing hot punch from a tankard holding a gallon or more, called "Solomon Townsend," after a friend.

Life of Campestris Ulm

The following amusing stories, descriptive of wigs and the manner in which they were worn, are taken from *Recollections of Samuel Breck*, pp. 112, 113.

"Catharine Macaulay, the historian, when past middle age married a very young man by the name of Graham, and came with him to Boston about the year 1786. They were much noticed. It was the fashion then for men and women to wear long head-dresses, with well-frizzled hair covered with powder, having previously been curled with hot irons and stiffened with pomatum. Decked in this manner Mrs. Graham, accompanied by her young husband, went to dine with a large party at my Aunt Hichborn's country-house in Dorchester. My father and mother were there. Just before dinner, when the company was assembled and sat in the expectation of its being immediately announced, a period always grave and formal, some one near Mrs. Graham made a remark that caused a sudden surprise, and occasioned her to throw her head back rather violently, when down fell all its counterfeit honors, and exposed her bald pate to the view of the astonished company. Mrs. Graham's head-gear was false and so unskilfully fixed that it tumbled to the floor behind her chair. The affrighted lady raised her hands to catch her wig, exclaiming, 'My God! my God!' She might have added,

> "'Was it for this I took such constant care
> The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?
> For this these locks in paper durance bound?
> For this with heated irons wreathed around?
> For this with fillets strained the stranger hair,
> And shaved my own, these foreign curls to wear?'

As it was, her always obsequious husband flew to her assistance when, retiring to another room, she soon made her toilet for dinner."

The other circumstance alluded to was this:

"A stranger came to Boston and took lodgings at the best boarding-house in town, and somehow or other was introduced to a few of the best families. His acquaintances were increasing

(he had not yet obtained footing in our family) when one evening at supper at Mrs. Ingersoll's, where he boarded, a servant passing suddenly behind his chair hooked the button of his coat into the hind part of a scratch worn by the stranger, and carried it off, leaving a bare poll, and oh, shocking to relate! a poll without ears! Both had been clipt close to the head. The caitiff recovered his wig and cleared out."

Persons of eminent position in other countries, as well as his own, were often favored guests in Governor Hancock's family. While the French fleet was in Boston Harbor, Count d'Estaing and some other persons of rank, with their life-guards, visited the Governor. Hancock sent a note to the Admiral of the fleet, inviting him to breakfast, with thirty of his officers. The Admiral accepted the invitation, but sent a request to the Governor to permit him the pleasure of bringing all his officers, including the midshipmen. This request was granted, but not without some solicitude as to the possibility of accommodating three hundred officers and men and providing for their entertainment. In those days, there were not the facilities of confectioners, and other resources of the present time. It was summer, and carts and wagons were pressed into the service to bring from the surrounding country the various fruits of the season.

It was found that milk sufficient for the demand could not be obtained, even from the whole vicinity of Boston. Boston Common was at that time used as a place of pasturage for cows; and Mrs. Hancock, in her dilemma, requested the life-guards and the servants of her family to take pitchers, mugs, and bowls, and to milk all the cows on the Common. If any persons interfered, they were to be sent to her for explanation. This novel proceeding made a laughable exhibition to the public, but it was a success, and offended no one.[1]

At the annual commencement of Harvard College, it was the custom for the Governor and the "Boston Cadets" (his escort) to be present at the college exercises. It was Mr. Hancock's pleasure that this military company should take their breakfast with him that morning; and as the services at Cambridge commenced at nine, a very early breakfast had to be given, in order that all might be in readiness for their place and duties at the appointed time. The Governor would have this plan carried out for several years, in spite of the great inconvenience it caused to his wife. She was compelled, in order to be present at the breakfast table, to summon her hair-dresser at four o'clock in the morning; and the day was always one of extreme fatigue to her.

[1] *Mrs. Ellet's Queens of American Society, pp.* 121, 122.

Many of the colored people were in the habit of marching in procession annually, on a certain day, before the Governor's house. When they stopped in front of it, he would address them from the balcony.[1]

Among other visitors were Brissot and the famous wit of the town, Nathaniel Balch, a hatter well known as the Governor's jester. "The latter had a shop on Washington St., opposite Water, where, seated in a broad arm-chair at the shop-door, he would keep his visitors in a roar at his witticisms. The attachment of the Governor was so strong, that when he was called away, Squire Balch attended him like a shadow; once when Hancock was called upon to visit the district of Maine in his official capacity with Azor Orne of Marblehead, Counsellor, their arrival in Portsmouth was thus humourously announced as follows: On Thursday last arrived in this town Nathaniel Balch Esq. accompanied by His Excellency John Hancock and the Hon. Azor Orne, Esq."[2]

Brissot afterwards wrote of John Hancock: "He shows himself the equal and the friend of all. I supped at his house with a hatter, who appeared to be in great familiarity with him. Mr. Hancock is amiable and polite when he wishes to be; but they say he does not always choose it. He has a marvelous gout, which dispenses him from all attentions, and forbids the access to his house." Sullivan, in his *Letters on Public Characters*, expresses his opinion that so much gout was caused by the general practice of drinking punch in the mornings as well as evenings. "The Tankard was prepared early and visitors during the day were invited to partake of it. The usual dinner hour was one or two; and the suppers were abundant in good things. The evening amusements were cards and dancing," the dances being the stately Minuet and lively Contra-dances.

But the Military Pageants in front of the Mansion especially interested Campestris. Annually the Boston Cadets gathered to escort the Governor to the Harvard Commencement and were invited in to the Mansion to an early breakfast,

[1] *Mrs. Ellet's Queens of American Society, p.* 123.
[2] *Loring's Hundred Boston Orators.*

and the hair-dresser was summoned at four o'clock in the morning to dress Madam's hair, so she could preside at the table.

The annual parade of colored soldiers delighted little Campestris more than all others, and as they marched proudly by, reviewed by Governor and Madam from their balcony, bearing a silk flag, the gift of the Governor, with the device a pine tree and a buck, and with the initials "J. H." and "G. W." above and a scroll bearing the words "The Bucks of America," he joined the spectators frantically in the applause.

From midnight Saturday to sunset Sunday was weekly a day of rest for Campestris. He hardly dared to stir a leaf; even the cows abstained in large measure from chewing their cuds and the Common was deserted. One Sunday, however, he was astonished and shocked to observe the Governor taking a turn in the mall on his way home from church. He was glad to learn the next day that the Governor was fined, and, much as he respected his sponsor, felt that it served him right.

The following incident, connected with circuit life at that period, is recorded in the State archives, and may be entertaining to some of our readers. It is well known that nowhere more strictly than in New England has the Sabbath been consecrated to religious duties. This, particularly true of colonial times, long afterwards continued characteristic of its people. Blue laws, in Massachusetts as in Connecticut, punished its desecration with heavy penalties. From midnight to sunset, for the day was thus mercifully somewhat shortened by law, no hackney-coach was permitted to drive in or out of Boston, without warrant from a magistrate; no vehicle allowed to move, during service, faster than a walk. Governor Hancock, on one occasion, was fined for taking a turn in the mall on his way home from church. By the statute of 1792, travelling or other secular employments, unless for some purpose of necessity or humanity, was prohibited on the Lord's day; and wardens, tithingmen, and other functionaries, were clothed with unusual powers to enforce its observance.[1]

Numerous celebrations took place on the Common at the close of and immediately after the war, a notable one which

[1] *Life of James Sullivan, by Thomas C. Amory, vol. i., p. 262.*

especially interested Campestris being in honor of the victory over Cornwallis in 1782, when his army surrendered at Yorktown. A pyramid of cord-wood fifty feet high was piled up in the middle of the green and fired at night.

In 1784 Campestris was delighted to overlook the planting of a third row of trees on the Tremont Street mall, and regarded with approval the raising of many of the low portions of the Common, the filling up of holes and the grading of uneven places, as described more in detail by Shurtleff, in his *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston*, as follows: —

> Quite an agreeable change came over the Common in the year 1784, just as the town was beginning to revive from the effects of the revolutionary war, by which, especially during the siege, as it has been called, it had suffered very much. Two persons, whose names should not be forgotten in this connection, were particularly active in procuring subscriptions, and in carrying on improvements that have characterized this as the period of the great improvement to the Common. John Lucas, Esq., the commissary of pensioners for Massachusetts, who resided and had his office in Orange street, which it must be borne in mind was that portion of Washington street extending from Essex street to Dover street, was one of these; and the other was Mr. Oliver Smith, a noted apothecary, who dwelt in Milk street, and kept shop in old Cornhill, now the north end of Washington street. Under the direction of these gentlemen, many of the low portions of the Common were raised, the holes filled up, the uneven places graded, the fences repaired, and a large number of trees set out, not only in the mall, but in various parts of the enclosure, particularly in the range of the ridge of high land leading from West street to the corner of Carver street. The amount of money subscribed at the time, and paid in, was £285 14s. 7d., and the number of liberal contributors somewhat exceeded three hundred.
>
> To this attempt to benefit the Common the town was indebted for the third row of trees in the Tremont street mall, then known as the great mall and sometimes as the old mall, to distinguish it from the little mall (or Paddock's walk) and the new mall, which was that now called the Beacon street mall. On the occasion, the Selectmen, at a meeting held on the twenty-sixth of July, 1784, gave permission for the improvements, as is made evident by the following minute upon their records:
>
> "Dr. Smith and other subscribers for planting another Row of Trees in the Common, & under the direction of the Selectmen, had liberty granted accordingly."

BEACON STREET MALL

In 1787 occurred the saddest blow that his sponsors had ever known in the death of their only son, nine years old, and Campestris sadly watched the Governor's own coach leaving the door of the Mansion with the corpse, followed by another coach with that worthy gentleman and his amiable lady in great affliction.[1]

The next year the former rebellious colonies, now sovereign Commonwealths and States, came to an agreement among themselves and the infant Samuel was born, familiarly called later in life, Uncle Samuel, abbreviated to Uncle Sam, and King George's Country became Uncle Samuel's Country, though the interpretation of the terms of the agreement is in dispute even to the present time.

One day in 1789 Campestris beheld his sponsor, his limbs swathed in flannel, suffering from gout, on his way to make that celebrated call on Washington where etiquette thrust into the background the more vital question of whether a creation is greater than the creators, and the next day Campestris regarded with interest the famous Virginian making his return call.

Four years after, Oct. 8, 1793, the saddest event in the life of Campestris occurred in the death of his sponsor. He participated in the universal grief and when, after lying in state eight days, the funeral wended its way, bearing the body of the first, the most picturesque, and the best of all the Governors of the Commonwealth, Campestris felt that life would never hereafter be the same.

The arrangements for the procession, taken from *John Hancock, his book,* by Abram English Brown, were as follows:

Order of Procession
for the
Funeral of the late Governor Hancock.

Funeral Escort
Under the Command of Brigadier-General Hull.

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[1] *Independent Chronicle of February* 1.

Officers of the Militia with side arms.
Justices of the Peace.
Judges of Probate.
Justices of the Court of Common Pleas.
Attorney-General and Treasurer.
Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court.
Members of the House of Representatives.
Members of the Senate.
Sheriff of Suffolk with his Wand.
Members of the Council.

Quartermaster.		His Honor	Secretary.
Adjutant-General.		The Lieutenant-Governor.	
Aid-de-camp to the deceased.	The pall supported by	six of the oldest Counsellors.	Aid-de-camp to the deceased.

Relations.
Vice-President and Members of Congress.
Judges and Secretaries of the United States.
Gentlemen heretofore Counsellors and Senators of Massachusetts.
Foreign Ministers and Consuls.
The President and Corporation.
The Professors and other Instructors of Harvard College.
Selectmen and Town Clerk.
Overseers of the Poor and Town Treasurer.
Ministers of the Gospel.
Members of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company.
Committee of Brattle Street Church, of which The Deceased was a Member.
Other Citizens and Strangers.

Order of March.

The procession will move from the Mansion House of the late Governor Hancock, across the Common and down Frog Lane to Liberty Pole, through the Main Street, and round the State House, up Court Street — and from thence to the place of interrment. Colonel Tyler will superintend the forming of the Procession of Officers which precede the Corpse, and Colonel Waters that of the other citizens who follow.

It is desired that the Procession may move four a breast when practicable.

October 14, 1793.

It detracts from the honor displayed by this pageant to learn that the funeral charges were paid from the estate of the deceased.

The following description of the funeral is taken from the *New Hampshire Gazette*, Oct. 22, 1793:

The body of Governor Hancock lay in state "eight days for the citizens to pay their last tribute of respect to his memory. They came in thousands, with expressions of grief and affection." The funeral was most impressive. At sunrise all the bells tolled for an hour, the flags in town and on the shipping were "half-hoisted;" the stores were closed.

"On Monday last the remains of His Excellency John Hancock, Esq., Governor and Commander-in-Chief of this Commonwealth, were interred with every mark of respect and honor which affection and gratitude could inspire."

The journal continues, "At two o'clock the procession formed. In the first carriage was the amiable lady of deceased. . . . Samuel Adams, who was Lieutenant Governor, followed the bier as chief mourner. The Vice-President was among those that followed the corpse; the members of the honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the United States; judges of the United States courts, who appeared for the last time in full dress, which was their gowns and wigs;" the Secretary of War; the military of the town and of the neighboring country, the officers all in uniform with side-arms. The Boston Artillery had the Hancock piece of artillery reversed, with a pall of black velvet over it. All the drums in the procession "were muffled and covered with crape." There were municipal officers, the various incorporated bodies, strangers and citizens; the barristers, who "wore black gowns and club wigs," and the "funeral closed by the captains of vessels and seamen, with flags furled." . . . "During the movement of the procession minute guns were fired at the Castle, and from a detachment of Captain Bradly's Artillery station on Beacon Hill."

The Rev. Peter Thacher, his pastor, in the sermon at his funeral, remarked, "Perhaps there is not a person in America who has done more generous and noble actions than Gov. Hancock, and who has, upon all occasions, contributed more liberally to public institutions. Besides the grand and hospitable manner in which he entertained foreigners and others in his house, he expended large sums for every patriotic purpose, and for the benefit of our university, and equalled the gener-

osity of his worthy patron to it by his own donations. I should be guilty of base ingratitude," continues Dr. Thacher, "did I not thus publicly acknowledge numberless instances of kindness, attention, and liberality, which I have received at his hands. These now lie heavy at my heart, and increase my sorrow for his loss, though they have not bribed me to exceed the truth in delineating his character."

America never had a more devoted patriot than John Hancock; and the secret motive of his soul was disclosed in the declaration he made on taking the oath of office in the old State House, in King-street, Oct. 26, 1780, when he became the first governor under the new constitution, which is another apology for delay, where he remarked, "Having, in the early stage of this contest, determined to devote my whole time and services, to the utter exclusion of all private business, even to the end of the war, and being ever ready to obey the call of my country, I venture to offer myself, and shall endeavor strictly to adhere to the laws of the constitution."[1]

John Adams remarked, in a letter to Rev. Jedediah Morse, D.D., written in 1818, "Of Mr. Hancock's life, character, generous nature, great and disinterested sacrifices, and important services, if I had forces, I should be glad to write a volume. But this, I hope, will be done by some younger and abler hand." It is honor enough to John Hancock that his daring patriotism, in the direst period of his country's perils, rendered him especially obnoxious to the British throne.[2]

"Thy political reputation, Hancock," says Benjamin Austin, "will ever be revered by the republicans of America! Thou wilt live, illustrious spirit, in the hearts of thy countrymen; and while liberty and the rights of thy country are duly estimated; thy name will be held in grateful remembrance. The proscription of George the Third is a 'MAUSOLEUM' to thy memory, which will survive a ponderous monument of marble!"[3]

John Adams writes of Samuel Adams and John Hancock: "They were the first movers, the most constant, steady, persevering springs, agents,

[1] *Loring's Hundred Boston Orators, p.* 89.
[2] *Ibid, p.* 117.
[3] *Ibid, p.* 121.

and most disinterested sufferers and firmest pillars of the whole Revolution."[1]

A Discordant Note

There have been few men in history who have achieved so much fame, and whose names are so familiar, who at the same time really did so little and left so slight a trace of personal influence upon the times in which he lived, as John Hancock. He was valuable chiefly from his picturesqueness. Everything about him is picturesque, from his bold, handsome signature, which gave him an assured immortality, to his fine house, which appears in the pictures of the day as the "Seat of his Excellency, John Hancock." His position, wealth, and name made him valuable to the real movers of the Revolution, where men of his stamp were almost without exception on the side of the Crown; and it was this which made such a man as Sam Adams cling to and advance him and which gave him a factitious importance. Hancock was far from greatness; indeed it is to be feared that he was not much removed from being the "empty barrel," which is the epithet, tradition says, that the outspoken John Adams applied to him. And yet he had real value after all. He was the Alcibiades, in a certain way, of the rebellious little Puritan town; and his display and gorgeousness no doubt gratified the sober, hard-headed community which put him at its head and kept him there. He stands out with a fine show of lace and velvet and dramatic gout, a real aristocrat, shining and resplendent against the cold gray background of everyday life in the Boston of the days after the Revolution.[2]

John Adams very frankly wrote to William Tudor, who liked neither Samuel Adams nor John Hancock:

"I can say with truth that I profoundly admired him [Hancock], and more profoundly loved him. If he had vanity and caprice, so had I, and if his vanity and caprice made me sometimes sputter, as you know they often did, mine, I well know, had often a similar effect upon him. But these little flickerings of little passions determine nothing concerning essential characters. I knew Mr. Hancock from cradle to grave. He was radically generous and benevolent. . . . Though I never injured or justly offended him, and though I spent much of my time, and suffered unknown anxiety in defending his property, reputation and liberty from persecution, I cannot but reflect upon myself for not paying him more respect than I did in his life-time. His life will, however, not ever be written. But, if statues, obelisks, pyramids, or divine honors were ever merited by man, by cities, or nations, James Otis, Samuel Adams and John Hancock deserved these from the town of Boston and the United States."

[1] *Dorothy Quincy, by Ellen C. D. Q. Woodbury, p. 223.*
[2] *John Hancock, in Memorial History of Boston, Henry Cabot Lodge, vol. iii.*

Mrs. Mercy Warren, who was more given to praise others than John Hancock, has said: "He declined the smallest concession that might lessen the independence and sovereignty of each State, and supported his opinions with firmness and dignity equally popular and honorable to himself.

"His memory was embalmed in the affections of his townsmen."

Samuel Adams writes that he was "a popular idol, with a large following."[1]

Not only had Hancock himself been a liberal benefactor of the university, but the wealthy relative whose fortune he inherited had, besides other munificent contributions to its wants, endowed one of its professorships. In 1772 Hancock was created its treasurer. When he went to Philadelphia, for their greater security, he took the papers of the college with his own. His incessant duties as president of Congress did not admit of his return, and the professors, impatient for the interest upon the bonds, in 1777 sent a special agent to receive them. They were delivered, and Hancock generously defrayed the expenses of the messenger. With less regard to the injury such a step might do to the influence of Hancock, and likewise to the State, in Congress, than to have the college bonds in the custody of some one legally responsible, they immediately chose Mr. Storer in his place. He was, no doubt, greatly mortified; but other sufficient reasons can be assigned for his subsequent relations with the college than any feeling of resentment. There was a balance of some hundreds of pounds in his keeping. The Revolution had swept away all his ready means, involved him in great losses and heavy expenses for the public service, and his large real estate was quite unsalable. In the unsettled and greatly depreciated state of the currency, no rule of settlement would have satisfied both parties. When, in 1785, the improved state of affairs admitted of an equitable standard for adjusting the account, it was liquidated, and the balance secured by mortgage. This backwardness to satisfy a debt not in his power to pay without great sacrifice of property, is the only blemish upon the character of John Hancock. Those disposed to condemn him should remember that he had contributed to the Revolution more than one hundred thousand dollars, and, after its close, devoted his means without reserve to every public object.

It has been charged against him that he was unduly fond of popularity; that he too sedulously courted its smiles, was too easily elated by its pleasing intoxication. Yet no instance can be fairly stated where any such weakness warped his judgment, or made him faithless to duty. Human virtue is a central point between extremes; the perfect path lies along an elevation inclining away on either side into vice or folly. But even here there is a choice. One slope is to the light, the other to the

[1] *Dorothy Quincy, by Ellen C. D. Q. Woodbury, p. 223.*

shadow. How much more creditable to Hancock to have rejoiced in the affectionate demonstrations of his countrymen, than if, insensible to their applause, he had withdrawn without response into himself, cold, proud and repulsive!

This is a brief and very imperfect outline of the public career of John Hancock. We may have done injustice to his memory by this feeble tribute; but it cannot suffer at our hands. It is a bright light upon the hill-top to cheer and encourage the oppressed, struggling for freedom, here and everywhere, now and to the latest generations. But, if his fame require no special commemoration; if, with that of the heroes and sages raised up by Providence to do homage to the natal star of a great national existence, it is destined to survive both bronze and marble; we owe it to ourselves, and we owe it to our country, to pay to disinterested public service its most valued recompense, our grateful recollections.[1]

Governor Hancock left orders that he should be buried without public honor, and forbade the firing of a gun over his grave. The Commonwealth chose to have the management of the whole affair, and told Mrs. Hancock that the funeral and its expenses belonged to her. She submitted reluctantly to the arrangement, but she finally had to pay the bill of the obsequies, which amounted to eighteen hundred dollars.

A will, unsigned, was found after his death in which he gave the bulk of his property to the Commonwealth.[2]

Shabby Commonwealth!! thus early in your career you exemplified the old sayings, that the State can do no wrong, and that the dead have no rights that the living are bound to respect. You took advantage of Madam's lack of business experience and training, and defrauded her of the funeral expenses, amounting to eighteen hundred dollars, in a manner that, however pleasing to King George the Third, he would not have been guilty of, and your example would have made even Becky Sharp turn green with envy.

Long years after, in discussing the matter with Campestris, I ventured to excuse the little Commonwealth on the plea of youth; but Campestris would not heed this plea for an instant, but averred that she was old enough to know better, that she had been spoiled by over-much flattery, and vowed that not even a poplar would have behaved so meanly.

[1] *Life of James Sullivan, by Thomas C. Amory, vol. i., p. 282.*
[2] *Dorothy Quincy, by Ellen C. D. Q. Woodbury, pp. 226, 227.*

Life of Campestris Ulm

As the years rolled by after the death of his sponsor, the first Governor, Campestris developed more and more the characteristics which distinguished him in later life: his bole, or trunk, even in youth showed promise of the stateliness and grandeur evidenced by his portrait and so faithfully described as characteristic of his kin by Geo. B. Emerson, in his *Trees and Shrubs of Massachusetts:*[1]

The English elm is a noble tree. If it has less grace than the American, it has more stateliness and grandeur. It has more of the strength of the oak. It is distinguished from the American elm by its bark, which is darker and much more broken; by having one principal stem which soars upwards to a great height, and by its branches, which are thrown out more boldly and abruptly and at a larger angle. Its limbs stretch out horizontally, or tend upwards, with an appearance of strength to the very extremity. In the American, they are almost universally drooping at the end. Its leaves are closer, smaller, more numerous, and of a darker color. It has been objected to this elm by Gilpin (*Forest Scenery*, vol. i., p. 90) that it wants a definite character, that it has often so great a resemblance to an oak that it may, at a distance, be mistaken for it. The observation is undoubtedly well founded, but to one who would gladly have the satisfaction of looking on the king of trees, but cannot wait for its tardy growth, it is very far from an objection. The American elm is so planted everywhere, that it is possible to be weary of seeing it; in which case, as a variety, the sight of a stately English elm is a relief. It has, moreover, the advantage of being clothed in an unchanged foliage, several weeks longer than our native tree.

The English elm continues to increase for one hundred, or one hundred and fifty years, and probably much longer, although compared with the oak, it is not a long-lived tree, the very old ones being usually hollow at the base. For several centuries it has been planted for ornament, on avenues and public walks in France, Spain and the Low Countries, and in England, immemorially. When full grown, it is four or five feet in diameter, and sixty or seventy feet high. Raised from seed, it forms innumerable varieties, distinguished by their difference in habit and appearance, time of leaf and peculiarity of hue, and by the qualities of the wood. These varieties, some of them very valuable, are propagated by shoots, and by grafting. Like the American elm, it is of very rapid growth. Evelyn says it has been known to rise to the height of a hundred feet in less than a century.

[1] *Trees and Shrubs of Massachusetts, by Geo. B. Emerson, pp.* 300, 301.

RITCHIE. PICTURE OF COMMON. 1804-1811

Courtesy of Mr. William H. Hill

There are many fine trees of this kind in Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester, and some other neighboring towns, but none of very great size.

The largest on the Mall, bordering Boston Common, was measured by Professor Gray and myself in 1844, and found to be twelve feet and three inches in circumference at three feet from the lower side, and eleven feet two inches at five feet. It is a stately and very beautiful tree. The European elms on Paddock's Mall, near Park Street Church, are said to have been planted in 1762, by Major Adino Paddock and Mr. John Ballard. In 1826, several of them measured nine feet at four feet above the ground. Several of them now measure nine feet ten inches at four feet, having grown only half an inch annually, for the last twenty years. This, however, is not surprising, as they are immediately surrounded on all sides by an almost impenetrable pavement, and must get all their nutriment from a distance on one side, beyond a heavy wall. A differently constructed gutter, allowing the water and drainings of the street to penetrate, would doubtless quicken their growth.

Providentially we are enabled to reproduce the earliest authentic portrait of Campestris, at the age of twenty-four to thirty years[1] from the date of his settlement here.

It is a reduced copy of a water-color which was found by the late Andrew Ritchie in a shop in Paris, and is now owned by his son, Colonel Harrison Ritchie. It represents the Common and neighborhood somewhere between 1804 — when the Amory House, seen and still standing on the corner of Beacon and Park Streets, was erected (see view of Park Street, in *Memorial History of Boston*, vol. iii., p. 232) — and 1811, when the monument seen over the stable of the Hancock House was taken down. The mansion of the first governor under the Constitution ranges in the line of the Capitol; and the trees in front of it are probably the ones referred to in a letter of Theodore Lyman, Sept. 25, 1815, when he writes about the gale of that month to Edward Everett, his classmate, then in Germany: "How many lamentations has poor Madam Scott made over that beautiful row of elms opposite her house, which, with about fifteen of the largest trees in the mall, have been levelled."[2] The widow of Hancock had married one of Hancock's sea-captains, Captain James Scott, and was still living in the house.

Campestris stands at the left of the line of those trees in front of the Mansion at the Belknap (afterwards Joy Street)

[1] *Campestris always computes his age from the time of his settlement on Boston Common, and not from the time he was a seedling in the Nursery.*

[2] *Memoir of Theodore Lyman, Jr., p.* 11; *also see Shurtleff, Description of Boston, p.* 321.

entrance to the Common, the by-paths which led to it unmistakably indicated. His portrait, although a sketch, discloses much of the expression and character which distinguished him in later life.

Miss E. S. Quincy described to the editor of the *Memorial History of Boston* other houses seen in the picture. That on the extreme left was built by Mr. John Phillips in 1804-5, and long occupied by him. It is still standing, with the entrance changed to Walnut Street, which was cut through on its upper side, and the house is spoken of in a communication by Mr. Wendell Phillips, given in a note to Mr. Bugbee's chapter in Vol. iii. It was bought about 1829, and greatly improved, by Lieut.-Governor Thomas L. Winthrop (father of the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop), who died in it. The large house next on the right was built about 1805, by Thomas Perkins, and fronted on Mount Vernon Street. The block on that street, just west of Joy Street, now occupies its site. The garden is at this day covered by the houses with deep front yards, which are on the westerly side of Joy Street. The house with columns was built by Dr. Joy, with a garden in front of it. A traveller, a few years earlier (1792), had described this house: "The front is among the neatest and most elegant I have seen. It is two stories high, overcast, and painted a kind of peach-bloom color, and adorned with semi-columns, fluted, of Corinthian order, the whole height of the edifice."[1] This house was removed about 1835 and rebuilt at South Boston.

From 1793 to 1804, Campestris had observed many changes in Beacon Hill and West Hill (Mt. Vernon or Copley's Hill, as it was occasionally called): The disappearance of the Beacon; the building of the new State House; the building of the houses of Joy, Perkins, and Phillips, as described above; the grading of the surface of Copley's tract, cutting down the summit of the hill and filling in the marsh; the laying out of Charles Street; the disappearance of the barberry, huckleberry, and blueberry bushes and wild roses. Wendell Phillips thus describes the building of his father's house:

"Every incident that contributes to the life of the picture is valuable, though it may seem trivial; so I add this as illustrating how small Boston limits were 80 years ago. My father, the first mayor, built in 1804-5, the

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc., March*, 1871, *p.* 61.

first brick house that was built on Beacon St. It still stands on the western corner of Walnut and Beacon Sts. Above and below there were a few wooden houses and next the State House stood Hancock's stone house. This street (Beacon) was then considered out of town. When Dr. Joy was advised to take his wife out of town for the benefit of country air he built her, eighty years ago, a wooden house, which stood where Mrs. Tudor's house now does, on the western corner of Joy and Beacon Sts.; the lot went back to Mt. Vernon St. or near it.

"I have often seen loads of hay, cut on the square between Joy, Walnut, Mt. Vernon and Beacon Sts., carried in to Dr. Joy's front gate, where Mrs. Armstrong's front door stands now. When my father moved into his Beacon St. house, his uncle, Judge V. Wendell, was asked in State Street what had induced his nephew to move out of Town."[1]

Dr. Joy's purchase is described by "Gleaner," as follows:—

Dr. Joy was desirous of getting a house *in the country*, as more healthful than a town residence, and he selected this locality as "being country enough for him." There were, indeed, then but *two houses* west of the square, which he purchased, one of them occupied by Charles Cushing, Esq., the other by "Master" Vinal, both standing on the Copley estate. The barberry bushes were flourishing over this whole area, as they now do on the hills of West Roxbury. And he was right in believing that nowhere else could he inhale purer breezes than those which were wafted across the Boston Common and the river that then washed its borders. There were then no noxious exhalations from the "Back Bay;" and they do not, indeed, even now, reach as far as this favored spot.

The prices paid by Dr. Joy were £100, £66, 13s., 4d., $500, and £337, or about $2,000.[2] There now stand on this land twenty-two dwelling-houses, among which are many of the very finest in our whole city. Dr. Joy sold off all the westerly and most of the northerly portions, retaining for his own occupancy the southeast part of the estate, measuring 97 feet on Beacon street, and 254 feet, 7 inches on Belknap street, now called Joy street. On this he erected a modest and graceful wooden dwelling-house, which was eventually removed to South Boston Point, where it is still, or was recently, standing, on land of Benjamin Adams, Esq. Here he lived till his death, in 1813. He left a widow, Abigail, and two children, Joseph G. and Nabby; and, in 1833, this reserved lot was sold by his heirs for $98,000, and upon it were erected three dwelling-houses on Beacon street and the four southerly houses of the block on Joy street.[3]

[1] *James M. Bugbee, in Memorial History of Boston, vol. iii.*
[2] *"Gleaner's" figures.*
[3] *"Gleaner," in Record Commissioners, 5th Report, pp.* 135, 136.

Life of Campestris Ulm

Since the year 1784, many trees have been set out upon the Common, forming the several malls and avenues which now give ornament to it.

The Park Street mall was laid out by Charles Bulfinch in 1804-5.

The mall on Beacon street was laid out during the years 1815 and 1816, the neighboring street being widened and straightened. The expense was defrayed from a subscription raised in the year 1814 for the purpose of defence against a contemplated attack from the British in the Madison War.

The Charles street mall was commenced in the year 1823, and completed in 1824, during the first year of the mayoralty of the elder Quincy. In 1826, through the energy of the same gentleman, the old poplar trees which used to disfigure the Park street mall were unceremoniously cut down early one morning, and the beautiful elms set out in their place by his own hands. The two American elms, which formerly stood within the sidewalk of the same mall outside of the fence, were very early placed before the old town buildings, which have been before alluded to as being situated upon Centry street. Several unsuccessful attempts have been made to have these old landmarks of ancient days removed; and although one of these venerable shade trees has been obliged to yield to incorrigible fate, yet one of the twins of the forest still remains, defying the axe, as it has heretofore the storms and winds.

The Boylston street mall was extended across the burial-ground in 1836, two rows of tombs being closed for the purpose; and with this improvement the Common became for the first time entirely surrounded with malls.

Besides the malls which ornament the sides of the Common, there are many paths, or walks, which traverse it in various directions, chiefly as "short-cuts" from one to another of the several openings in the fence, at the approaches of the different streets and avenues that radiate from all parts of the enclosure. The walk leading to Carver street from West street gate (built under the direction of ex-Alderman Samuel Hatch) has for a long time been known by those frequenting the Common as Ridge Path, on account of the bluff-like appearance it formerly had on its westerly side. Lyman Path, with its magnificent trees, elms and maples, led from West street to Joy street openings. Long Path and Armstrong diverged also from the Joy street opening, the former leading to the corner of Tremont and Boylston streets, and the latter to Winter street; and Brimmer Path led from Winter street to Spruce street. Other walks than these have

been variously designated by persons in the habit of passing through them. Why should not that which runs in a southerly direction from the Great Tree, and by the four Balsam Poplars or Aspens, be called Bigelow Path, in remembrance of the ex-mayor who planted the quivering-leaved trees beside it? And why not give the name of Quincy Path to the walk leading from the corner of Park and Beacon streets to West street, in honor of the venerable man who during the early years of his mayoralty did so much to improve the Common?

All the walks in the enclosure of the Common have had trees set out at their edges since the adoption of the city charter, it being the pride of the committees of each year to do something to beautify and adorn this favorite holiday resort of the citizens.

In 1830, about the time of the bicentennial celebration of the naming of the town, it was proposed, by persons who certainly could not have had much reverence for the past, to change the name of the Common and malls to "Washington Park." This endeavor, however, did not meet with public favor; and the old name, homely perhaps, but sufficiently good, has continued in use until the present day. May it never be recorded in our city annals that such a folly as that then contemplated has been perpetrated; for it is sufficiently discreditable to Boston that the names of many streets which once were the record of the munificence of the honored dead have been unwittingly changed to gratify the vanity or please the fancy of modern innovators.[1]

Campestris enjoyed and was pleased with the laying out and planting of the several malls surrounding the Common, but as his name, field-loving, implies, was decidedly of the opinion that a grave mistake was made in planting and planning the cross-paths. Under this treatment, a large part of the previous charm of the Common disappeared. The cross-paths, in most cases, should have followed slightly curved lines, which could have adjusted themselves to the contours of the surface and, with sufficient shade provided by the malls along its borders, the cross-paths would have been far more attractive and beneficial, if open to sunlight and air; an occasional grouping of trees over the surface of the Common would have provided all the variety needed. For at least nine months in the year sunlight and air are more needed along the cross-paths than

[1] *Shurtleff's Topographical History of Boston.*

shade, and a wholesome use of the Common and a delight to the eye would have resulted, instead of providing a shady resort for loafers. As one looked down the Armstrong, Lyman, and Long paths and observed the jumble of trees of Acers, Tilias, Americana Ulms, Liriodendrons, Populus, etc., and reflected that instead of crossing the ocean westward, as a sapling, Campestris could have gone over to the Continent, one might sing of him, as Bill Bobstay, boatswain's mate, sang of Ralph Rackstraw in *Pinafore:*

Boatswain: He is an English Ulm.
For he himself has said it,
And it is greatly to his credit
That he is an English Ulm.

All: That he is an English Ulm.

Boatswain: For he might have been a Roosian,
A French, or Turk, or Proosian,
Or perhaps Italian.

All: Or perhaps Italian.

Boatswain: But in spite of all temptations
To belong to other nations,
He remains an English Ulm.

Most of the Americana Elms planted along the malls and cross-paths were a crooked, inferior lot of suckers, entirely lacking the graceful, well-proportioned, sturdy character of the Old Elm, which was a seedling. The Americana Elms, even at their best, can never possess the dignity and charm that made the early planting of Common or Tremont Street malls with Campestris Ulms, in 1728 and 1734, "the pride and ornament of the Town."

Campestris had bravely withstood, in the thirty-five years of his settlement, many a gale and storm, but the great gale of Sept. 23, 1815, was to try his treehood as it had never been tried before. Friday, the day before, a storm of rain from the

ARMSTRONG PATH

northeast commenced. All through the day it was not alarming, but that night it rained hard, and the wind increased in violence until toward morning, when it abated considerably.

At daybreak, the Common was deserted; no men were seen on the by-paths, nor cows near the Great Tree and the ponds. No swains or maids hovered around the Wishing-Stone; everything endowed with locomotion had taken to cover, glad enough to abdicate their fancied superiority and leave the trees to bear the brunt of the storm. Along the line of Common Street, bordering the mall were, first, the outer row of noble Jonathan Williams trees of 1728; the middle row of trees, planted by the selectmen in 1734, both rows, kindred of Campestris; and, lastly, on the inside, the later mixed row of American and English elms and sycamores of the 1784 planting. By the burying-ground stood the kindred elms of Paddock, and along the line of Park Street stood a mixed row of trees, while on Beacon Street, in front of the Mansion of Hancock, were the line, mostly of kindred trees, of Governor Hancock's planting, with Campestris on the left of the line.

The Old Elm at the base of Powder-House Hill and the small trees along the ridge and scattered about, of the 1784 planting, alone remain to be mentioned. The trees needed no barometer to inform them there was a dreadful storm about to break over their devoted heads, and they felt it in all their tissues.

At dawn the wind veered to the east, became brisk, and the rain came down in torrents. At nine the rain nearly ceased, but the wind became a gale, lasting until a quarter before eleven, then suddenly shifting, without rain, from the east to southeast, increasing steadily in violence until at noon it became a hurricane. Up to this time Campestris had borne himself as bravely as the bravest, and all the trees, though sorely tried, had escaped unscathed; but those old veteran trees of the Williams planting had lately passed down the lines the warning that the crisis of the storm was imminent. Campestris braced himself for the final struggle, with his

head borne proudly on his straight, upright trunk, his supple, leathery roots and rootlets clinging tightly to the soil, all at tension. The fury and force of the wind were such as never in his life before had he experienced. It was the real gale that had arrived.

For the next hour Campestris did nothing but madly sway back and forth with his limbs and branches, his tufted twigs fluttering wildly, his shoots tangling themselves into knots, his leaves scattered with the wind, his deep roots holding for dear life to the sub-soil of the hill. The air was full of the debris torn from the roofs of buildings and of branches stripped from the trees, besides countless sea-birds driven wildly before the wind. Crash after crash followed one another, as the trees in the line where he stood were torn up by the roots and thrown down upon the ground. Campestris thought his last hour had come; perspiration[1] rolled down his trunk and he felt he could not endure the strain longer, when providentially at one o'clock the wind shifted to the southwest and soon sensibly abated; the worst was over, and Campestris relaxed and rested from his strenuous exertions. But, alas, at what cost! A survey of the field disclosed eleven of the trees in the line where he stood torn up by the roots and lying on the ground, together with thirteen in the mall, mostly in the latest planting of 1784, and three in Paddock's mall, and grieved he was over "the injury done to the Mall, that superb promenade, the pride and ornament of the Town."

The incidents of the above description are mainly taken from the *Boston Daily Advertiser* of Monday, Sept. 25, 1815; from the *Chronicle* of the same date; and from *Shurtleff's History*, the account of which was as follows: —

[1] *The air contains, especially during the summer months, all the principles of vegetation: Oil for the perfect food, water to dilute it, and salts to assimilate it. These are greedily absorbed by the vessels of the leaves and bark, and conveyed to the innermost parts of the plant for its growth and fructification. When the air happens to be cold and moist, this absorption takes place. When it is hot and dry, the same vessels throw off the superfluous moisture by perspiration. In animals, the kidneys and pores of the skin carry off the superfluity. The vegetable, not having kidneys, perspires more than the animal.— Plants: Their perspiration proved. Evelyn's Silva, vol. ii., p.* 123.

Life of Campestris Ulm

Great September Gale of 1815

This tremendous gale, which will ever be memorable in the annals of Boston, occurred on Saturday, the twenty-third of September, commencing from the east, about an hour before noon. At twelve o'clock the wind changed to the southeast, blowing with an increased violence, amounting to a hurricane; but, fortunately, continued but a short time, shifting at about one o'clock to a southwesterly direction, when it ceased in its violence. The damage to buildings was exceedingly great. Several of the chimneys of the State House were upset, as were, also, about sixty others in different parts of the town. The steeples of the Old South, Hollis Street, Charles Street Baptist, and Park Street meeting-houses were much injured, and barely escaped being blown down. The roofs of several buildings were taken off, and a great destruction of slates and window-glass ensued from the violence of the gale. Sea-birds were driven in quantities forty or more miles inward from the sea, and sea-swallows (commonly known as Mother Carey's chickens) were seen in the vicinity of the wharves —a circumstance never before known, as they are rarely seen within several leagues of land, their home being upon the deep waters of the ocean. One building was entirely blown down and burnt,— the old wooden glass-house in Essex Street; and the shipping in the harbor and at the wharves was very much injured. But we are told that the most impressive scene was exhibited on the Common and its immediate vicinity. Many of the old and stately trees which formed the old mall, and skirted the Common, were torn up by their roots and prostrated, carrying the fences with them; and several of the large elms of Paddock's mall shared the same fate, overturning a portion of the brick wall of the burial-ground. One of the trees of the old mall measured then seven feet and eleven inches in girth. The sycamores and elms fared alike. The trees which suffered most were in the westerly row at the north part of the mall, and several were opposite the State House. It is remarkable that the older trees on the outside of the mall, which had been planted more than eighty years, withstood the tempest comparatively unharmed; while those in the most leeward row, and which were of younger growth, were prostrated, the wind at the time of its greatest violence coming from a southeasterly point. In a short time the trees were trimmed and raised to their places; and, though they made a sad appearance the remainder of the year, most of them lived, and have endured several hard blows since. The sycamores have, however, within a short time fallen a sacrifice to a blasting disease.

On Monday, the twenty-fifth of September, two days after the great gale, the Selectmen held a meeting, and among other minutes on their records is the following, which gives a sufficiently minute account of the damage to the trees:

"A very violent gale of wind having on Saturday last done great damage to the town in general, but particularly to the Common, by rooting up thirteen large trees in the Mall, & eleven in the line of Beacon street, & three by the burying ground in Common street, the chair informed the board that he had employed a number of labourers to replace them — they approved his proceeding, & appointed the chairman [Charles Bulfinch, Esq.] & Mr. [Jonathan] Hunnewell to superintend the work."

Wishing-Stone

One morning in 1820, in his fortieth year, Campestris observed a cluster of workmen around his old friend, the Wishing-Stone, one holding a drill, while another was swinging a heavy sledge-hammer. After a time this ceased, and another man seemed to be busy ramming and tamping something into a hole. Shortly after there was a great scampering of cows driven wildly at a distance and the cluster of men dispersed in various directions along the several paths, waving their hands as a warning. One man left behind lingered a short time, and then ran rapidly away. There was a flash, an explosion, the air was filled with smoke, and when it cleared, to the astonishment and grief of Campestris, his beloved boulder, the friend of his youth, was observed blown to fragments. In the language of trees, Campestris exclaimed, as he shook his limbs, "What have you done, you stupid louts, you churls and sons of churls? Know ye not, that it was no common stone; that, hallowed as it was by the vows of countless swains and maids, it possessed a sentimental value which, translated into dollars and cents, the only measure of value your vulgar, commonplace lives can appreciate, would amount to a sum you could never replace by your labor, if your lives were prolonged beyond the age of Methuselah? Would that you were buried in the debris of your own blast. Alas, alas!" he soliloquized, "a large part of the pleasure of my life has departed," and sadly he watched the stupid, indifferent men load the fragments on a drag and carry them away.

In after years Campestris could never allude to the destruction of his old friend without manifesting his grief and sorrow.

He maintained that it was one of the most fatuous acts that the Old Town ever perpetrated; that if the old Wishing-Stone had been preserved, it would have become as celebrated and famous as the Frog Pond; that it would have been the Mecca to which people from all over the land would have resorted; that even in time it might have filled that place in the affections of the townspeople now held by the Blarney Stone, and the whole later history of the town been changed.

One summer day in July, 1824, shortly after noon, Campestris was startled by observing a dense black smoke arising from the front of Beacon Street, near Charles. It was blowing a gale from the northwest, and shortly after the wooden houses, outbuildings, and fences were all ablaze. The old hand-tubs were soon rattling by, followed by crowds of men and boys, running in the direction of the fire, along the street, the mall, and the various by-paths.

Among the rest was "Gleaner," who ran rapidly by without taking any notice of Campestris. He afterwards wrote a graphic description of the fire, as follows: —

The Beacon-Street Fire[1]

On Wednesday, July 7th, 1824, just before two o'clock, the bell of Boston rang an alarm of fire, and instantly a dense mass of black smoke was seen to overhang the entire city. I have always been an amateur at fires. If the calamity must happen, I like to be present, to behold what sometimes proves to be a most magnificent spectacle. I was then a young man,— in my teens,— and hastening from 'Change to the corner of Park street, I saw at once that a most furious and destructive conflagration had commenced. The wind was blowing a hurricane from the northwest. When I reached the bottom of the Beacon-street Mall, a stream of fire was pouring through the passage-way west of Mr. Bryant's house, from carpenter shops and other combustible premises on Charles and Chestnut streets.

The flame was of the full width of the passage-way, and it was curling round into the front windows of Mr. B.'s house, which was then nearly finished and ready for occupancy. The out-buildings and fences of all that range of dwelling-houses were then of wood, so that the fire was also making its fearful approaches in the rear. I have never seen, before or

[1] *Fifth Report of the Record Commissioners, pp.* 178, 179.

since, any similar occasion of a more appalling character. The hasty removal of household furniture, much of it being thrown from the windows, which were broken out for the purpose; the panic of the occupants, as they and their children were obliged to fly, some at a notice of a few minutes; the crackling of the flames, the intense heat, the falling of the walls of one dwelling-house after another, as the fire proceeded along the street; the shouts of the firemen; the mass of spectators filling the bottom of the Common and the rising ground in its centre, the jets of flame often springing over a space of several feet, the burning fragments borne aloft over our heads to remote parts of the city; the magnitude of the danger, which led to the covering with wet blankets of houses even as distant as Mr. Otis's and Mr. Sears's,— formed together an aggregate of sights and sounds which can never be forgotten.

As those houses which at first were not thought in great danger, one after another, took fire and were consumed, owners who originally decided not to have their furniture moved were at last obliged to remove it so hastily that much was ruined, and much more was necessarily left behind. In some instances old family portraits and inherited articles of furniture, rendered invaluable by the associations of a lifetime, were thus reluctantly surrendered. On the other hand, a tin-kitchen was saved, and its viands cooking for dinner were protected from the danger of being overdone.

Extensive removals were made from several houses, which were eventually saved, as in the case of Mr. William Appleton's and others. The Common presented a curious medley of miscellaneous articles, the shabbiest household utensils side by side with elegant drawing-room carpets and ornaments. Bottles of wine which had not seen the light for twenty years were summarily decapitated without any ceremonious drawing of corks, and the Juno or Elipse vintage was probably never quaffed with greater relish than when it refreshed the parched throats of the exhausted firemen. Other amateurs, without having their apology, imitated their example, and the scene assumed rather a bacchanalian character. One gentleman, desirous of withholding further fuel from this conflagration, locked up his wine-cellar, and left its contents to be at least harmlessly consumed.

Seven dwelling-houses on Beacon street, east of the passage-way, were burnt, besides the entire range of buildings between the passage-way and Charles street. The fire was at last successfully checked at the house of the late Mr. Eckley. I suppose that it always happens that in a large fire somebody's policy has just expired. This was, I believe, the case with the late Mr. Henry G. Rice. To many besides him that was a very sad and discouraging day. Mr. Bryant had the advantage over his neighbors of not being incommoded by any furniture or family, as he had not yet taken

LYMAN PATH

possession. It is satisfactory to reflect that all the pecuniary loss then sustained has, undoubtedly, been much more than made good by the greatly enhanced value of real estate in that vicinity. And, independently of all the direct and perpetual advantages, of the most inestimable character, derived by our citizens from the Boston Common, it should never be forgotten that it was solely owing to the existence of this open space on this occasion that the entire southern portion of our city was not destroyed. The range of trees at the foot of the Beacon-street Mall rendered a truly important service. Suffering the flames of martyrdom, they died at their post of duty.

A burning cinder lodged in my eye, causing a violent inflammation, and bringing to an abrupt close my meditations on this striking spectacle, and a like inflammation of the same organ now brings to a like abrupt close the speculations of "GLEANER."

The Copley land on Beacon Hill about the year 1800 began to be rapidly covered with houses, and, as "Gleaner" writes in 1855, "the homes of a large proportion of those most distinguished among us for intellect and learning, or for enterprise, wealth, and public spirit were located there."

The site of Copley's house on Beacon Street was sold to Harrison Gray Otis. The houses of Otis and Sears are thus described by "Gleaner":[1]

The stone mansion of Mr. Sears was originally a much lower building, having only one bow in the centre, instead of two bows or projections. It fronted on a yard or carriage-way, laid out on the easterly side of his lot. It was a very graceful and beautiful building, and a great ornament to the street. He subsequently erected an additional house on the east, covering the whole front of his lot, and also making radical changes in the original structure. On this lot of Mr. Sears, behind the house, stood a barn, which was converted into a temporary hospital for the wounded British officers after the battle of Bunker Hill. When Mr. Sears was digging for the foundation of his house, the workmen came, at a depth of several feet under the surface, to a gigantic moccasined foot, perhaps 2½ feet long, broken off at the ankle, and carved from a kind of a sandstone not found in this vicinity, which he presented to the Boston Athenæum, where it now is — [*not*].

"Master Vinal" would doubtless be much gratified to find that his humble house has attained to such high distinction in these later times.

[1] "*Gleaner*," *Record Commissioners, pp.* 169, 170.

And even Mr. Copley would admit that the houses of Messrs. Sears, Parker, and Appleton have more than made good the two domiciles which are delineated in all the dignity of yellow paint, with doors, windows, and chimneys, on the original plan of the Mount Vernon Purchase (in Lib. 192). Except the old powder-house, we have seen that only these two houses appear on a plan of an estate containing a million of square feet, upon which now stand probably five hundred houses.

After Mr. Otis had sold his mansion house on Mt. Vernon street, he removed to an elegant and spacious house which he erected on Beacon street, next west to Mr. Sears's, and here he lived till his death. His lot was 120 feet front by 165 feet in depth. The easterly portion was a fine garden. Land at last became so valuable that he did not feel justified in retaining for a mere matter of sentiment this beautiful enclosure, which had long pleased all eyes, and decided to convert it to a more substantial use. He accordingly, in 1831, sold the easterly part to Mr. Sears, for $12,412.50 (L. 356, f. 227), who proceeded to erect a house, and on the west part Mr. Otis himself erected another. The bow of Mr. Otis's mansion house, which originally projected into the garden, still projects into this house, though this encroachment is ingeniously disposed of and concealed by its interior arrangements. When the houses were erected on this garden there was found what had the appearance of an old well, entirely filled up with beach sand. Its existence was before unknown. The foundations of the new buildings were constructed by arching it over. And perhaps, after many a year yet to come, it may again astonish the spectators. The mansion house itself, after Mr. Otis's death, was conveyed to, and is now owned by, Samuel Austin, by whom it has been thoroughly renovated. There is, perhaps, on the whole, no more desirable residence in Boston.[1] Mr. Austin paid for it the sum of $60,000.

Campestris much regretted, in 1830, the exclusion of his long-time friends, the cows, whom he had become accustomed to watch, for fifty years, upon the grass land of the Common, or resting under the shade of the Old Elm, or being driven to pasture in the morning and back again in the afternoon; but he realized that the growth of the town made it necessary.

In 1835 a notable event occurred in the life of Campestris in

[1] *The Author agrees with "Gleaner" that there was in* 1855 *no more desirable residence in Boston than the house of Otis,— as true in* 1910 *as in* 1855,— *but regrets that sentiment should not have triumphed, and the garden been retained; and believes that no possible use that could have been made of the proceeds of the sale could have exceeded in value the gratification of his own eye and those of his neighbors and the passers-by.*

GINGKO TREE, PUBLIC GARDEN

the transplanting of the Gingko Tree[1] from the garden of Gardner Green, through the personal efforts of Dr. Jacob Bigelow, to a place on the Common, across the mall, directly opposite the site of Campestris. He had never observed such a singular tree before. He looked down upon the Gingko with the same cold, disdainful, contemptuous air that Englishmen usually assume when travelling outside their own land. Poor little beggar! he internally remarked, and pitied the slowness of his growth. But had he possessed the power of locomotion, by going to the Public Garden, close to the Ether Monument, he might then have realized that a tree transplanted never becomes as vigorous and rapid growing as one undisturbed, and that the handsome Gingko growing there, a portrait of whom is shown on the opposite page, has made a most remarkable growth in the space of about thirty-five years — possibly due in part to the dead horses and cats reported to have been buried in this part of the ground, affording the same agreeable food that his countrymen are reputed to be fond of in their own land. Likewise, if Campestris could have travelled to China, the native land of the Gingko, he would have found trees far surpassing in grandeur and size any of his own proud family.

The following interesting information was afforded the author by the kindness of the late Francis B. Forbes:

May 2, 1907.

Dear Mr. Curtis:

Regarding the Maidenhair tree, I succeeded in finding my copy of Bunge's original paper on North China plants, and I enclose copy (or rather translation) of what he says.

Loudon has quoted him correctly, but probably not at first hand, as he omits the simple explanation given for the enormous trunk in question. It is all very interesting, and, if I can hit upon further details, I will let you know.

Sincerely yours,

F. B. Forbes.

[1] *The view of Beacon Street mall, west from the bole of Campestris, with the Gingko Tree on the left, is shown opposite page* 30. *Another view of Beacon Street mall in* 1880, *with Campestris, the largest tree on the right, is shown in Marshall P. Wilder's article, p.* 611, *vol. iv., Memorial History of Boston.*

Life of Campestris Ulm

May 4, 1907.

Dear Mr. Curtis:

In Siebold & Zuccarinis' *Flora Japonica* I find, under *Gingko biloba L.*, a quotation from Endlichen, an eminent botanist of the first half of last century. The original Latin is diffuse and inelegant, but the meaning is perfectly clear, and I enclose a free translation which I am sure you will find interesting and conclusive. Yours sincerely,

F. B. Forbes.

Enumeratio Plantorum quas in China boreali collegit Dr. Al. Bunge, Anno 1831.

Translations of St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences.

[*Translation.*]

March 7, 1832.

Salisburia Adiantifolia Sm. Rather rare in gardens and near Buddhist temples. Flowers in April. A very beautiful and extremely high tree, often having suckers starting from the roots, growing fast, close to the trunk, which is finally increased in size by their adhering to it. I myself saw, near the Temple Tan-dshe-ssy, such a tree, very old, whose history goes back to the Juan dynasty, having a circumference of about forty feet, very lofty, in full leaf, and having no other signs of age than its great height.

[*Free translation from passage quoted from Endlichen by Siebold & Zuccarinis, Flora Japonica ii., f. 74, published 1870.*]

Gingko biloba L. Each seed has most frequently two or three, but sometimes more, embryos. These, in germinating, swell and press together so closely that, often in their first sprouting, they become confluent as one seedling plant. This method of growth is artificially imitated by Chinese and Japanese gardeners, who bring together many suckers into a single stem, so as to multiply the strength of the tree. Accordingly, specimens are found, here and there, with trunks of a monstrous size of foliage.

In January, 1859, Governor Nathaniel P. Banks, in a message to the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, made the following suggestions in reference to the purchase of the Hancock Mansion:

During the past year I made official communication to the then living representative of the late Governor Hancock, with a view to provide for a future purchase by the legislature, of the Hancock House, and its transfer, upon the decease of the proprietor, to the Commonwealth. His great age,

and increasing infirmities, made it impracticable to enter upon any negotiations for this purpose. His death has been recently announced to the public; and I suggest that the legislature consider what measures may be now expedient, as regards a possible transfer, at some future time, of this estate to the Commonwealth. I know no subject that could better occupy the attention of the legislature on the birth day of Washington. The dignity and the duties of the chief executive magistrate alike require that he should reside at the capitol. Men who have official intercourse with him have a right to demand it, and if any executive service call him to any part of the State, the capital is the only central point of divergence. My own experience leads me to the conclusion that for the efficient discharge of any class of duties his residence here will soon be indispensable.

This estate is the last that retains the Revolutionary tone and character. It was originally a part of that upon which the Capitol buildings now stand. It is hallowed by associations connected with the memory, and the frequent presence of Washington, Franklin, Lafayette and other patriots. Its illustrious occupant, the President of the Congress of Independence, whose bold signature to the Declaration, which interprets better than eulogy or history the spirit and character of those who pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor in defence of its principles,— that illustrious patriot cherished through life the expectation that it would ultimately become the Executive Mansion of the Commonwealth, and if there be any conscious connection of separated existences, his spirit would mourn as the people will mourn when it shall disappear from the sight of men.

The suggestions of the Governor, the former "Bobbin Boy," so creditable to him, showing that the loom and the dancing-school are sometimes as favorable in promoting the growth of sentiment as the halls of a University, were reported upon favorably by a joint committee of the Legislature, but encountered active opposition from the rural districts, and were defeated. The opposition in the House, as reported in the newspapers of the day, was ably led by the member from Newburyport,— a shrewd, cunning, and wily lawyer, a graduate of Harvard College, who possessed exceptional ability in knowing how to befog a question and make the worse appear the better reason.

He was ably seconded by the member from Canton, who implored the members to be on the alert against executive

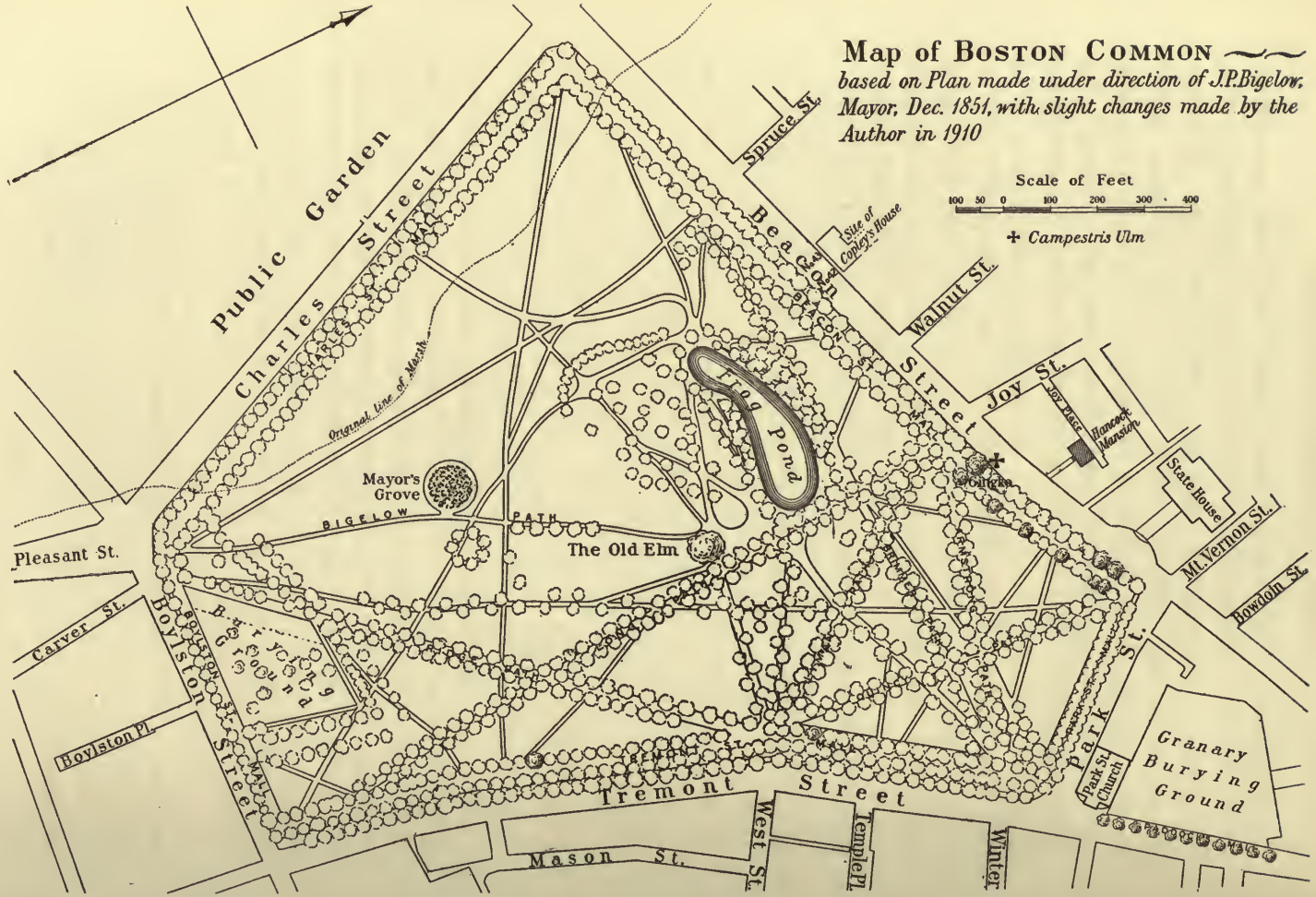
measures. He declared that the liberties of the Commonwealth were imperilled; that she would not tolerate this measure; defeat it, and her liberty was safe; consummate it, and her liberty would be lost, forever. The member from Middleboro, midst laughter and applause, declared it to be no test of patriotism to vote away other people's money; that there were plenty of old houses in Middleboro, but they were not asking other people to buy them.

The "Boston Clique" were handled without gloves; the opposition won: the Great and Good General Court, in their wisdom, rejected the pernicious measure, and the Commonwealth breathed freely once more.

In 1863 the debt of the Commonwealth to Madam Hancock and the heirs for unpaid funeral expenses amounted, at six per cent compounded annually (we have the authority of former treasurer Storer of Harvard College as to the equity of thus computing a debt), to twice the amount asked for the estate. The former town, now city, receives, after all the increase in values, an annual tax on the land of about $2,500. The heirs, in 1863, offered the mansion, with pictures and other objects of historical interest, for about the sum of one hundred thousand dollars, with the design of preserving it as a memento of Colonial and Revolutionary history. The offer was rejected. If the city owned the mansion to-day, and only twenty-five cents admission was charged, does any one doubt that interest on many times that amount would be obtained? Nearly fifty years have elapsed; is there a man, woman, or child within the limits of the Commonwealth that does not now regret the action then taken, and would they not sanction the payment of many times the amount then asked, to replace the famous old mansion?

Veritably, sentiment pays.

Campestris, when informed of the behavior of the Commonwealth, though greatly moved, was not surprised; he had long noted her ingratitude and lack of consideration for the widow and heirs of her first governor. He sorrowfully overlooked the


Map of Boston Common
based on Plan made under direction of J.P.Bigelow, Mayor, Dec. 1851, with slight changes made by the Author in 1910
Scale of Feet
100 50 0 100 200 300 400
+ Campestris Ulm
Public Garden
Charles Street
Spruce St.
Beacon Street
Site of Copley's House
Walnut St.
Joy St.
Joy Place
Hancock Mansion
State House
Mt. Vernon St.
Bowdoin St.
Original line of Marsh
Frog pond
Mayor's Grove
BIGELOW PATH
The Old Elm
College
Pleasant St.
Carver St.
Boylston Pl.
Boylston St.
Tremont Street
Mason St.
West St.
Temple Pl.
Winter
Park St.
Park St. Church
Granary Burying Ground

tearing down of the solid granite walls of the mansion, and the carting of the material away, and the erection of the two modern brown-stone houses in its place, to be followed long years after by a mean and inconspicuous 18 x 21 inch bronze tablet, clamped to an iron fence and bearing an inscription marking the site as the residence of John Hancock. Henceforth recollections of the dear old mansion and the glorious outdoor life enjoyed by him in connection with it must suffice.

In December, 1851, Mayor Bigelow had a map of the Common made by the city engineer, showing the location and names of all the trees thereon. This map has been reduced and is shown on opposite page. The following is the list of trees on the Common at that time:

American Elms	664	Buttonwood	1
English Elms	49	Black Aspen	5
Lindens	68	Black Ash	7
Tulips	17	White and Silver Leaf Maple	70
Oaks	8	Rock Maples	14
Sycamores	10	Arbor Vitæ	20
Hemlocks	1	Spruce	69
Gingko	1	Fir Trees, Mayor's Grove	250
Slippery Elm	1		
Total			1,255

At this time, as shown by the map, a large proportion of the English elms of the 1728 and 1734 planting had died and had been replaced with other trees, mostly American elms. There were only 9 left in the 1728 row, 4 in the 1734 row, 10 in the 1784 row, 4 in row along Beacon Street (including Campestris), and 5 south of Beacon Street mall. Of these, in 1910, only 1 is left in the 1784 row, 1 in same row of a somewhat later planting, the 2 by the Shaw Monument, Campestris, and 5 south of Beacon Street mall.

The author measured the following trees in 1910:

Campestris Ulm.
Girth, 3 ft. above ground, 14 ft., 5 in.
Height, 88 ft., 3 in.

Life of Campestris Ulm

Gingko on the Common.
Girth, 3 ft. above ground, 4 ft., 9 in.
Height, 56 ft., 9 in.
Gingko on the Public Garden.
Girth, 3 ft. above ground, 8 ft., 4 in.
Height, 65 ft.
Three English Elms (south side of Beacon Street mall).
Girth, 3 ft. above ground, respectively, 12 ft., 6 in.; 11 ft.; and 12 ft. 7 in.
English Elm (Tremont Street mall, near West Street Entrance).
Girth, 3 ft. above ground, 13 ft.
Height, 88 ft., 8 in.
English Elm (Tremont Street mall, near Attucks Monument).
Girth, 3 ft. above ground, 10 ft., 6 in.
Height, 73 ft.

In December, 1897, the author measured Campestris Ulm as, girth, 13 ft., 8 in., showing an increase in 13 years of 9 inches.

In the early seventies, Campestris was shocked to learn that those noble trees, the Paddock Elms, had been massacred. Sordid commercialism, prompted by a soulless corporation, had finally had its way, and trees everywhere recognized that it boded ill for them in the future.

There is an old saying that a man is never a hero to his valet; and the apt explanation is that this is so, not because the man may not be a hero, but because the valet is a valet.

In a similar vein, it could well be said that a tree is never noble, but simply so much possible cord-wood, to some men, not because the tree is not noble, but because the lives of these men are as dead as cord-wood.

From The Memorial History of Boston, *Topography and Landmarks of the Last Hundred Years*

Paddock's Elms, too, in whose grateful shade have waited hundreds of thousands of intending patrons of the horse-cars, are gone. They were watched over in their extreme youth by Adino Paddock, who planted them, and who darted out from his shop opposite to shake a boy who had shaken one of them. In their full vigor, they fell under the displeasure of city foresters who cherish the theory that trees need no moisture for their roots.

LAFAYETTE MALL

Branches which spread too far were chopped off remorselessly, and when at last the entire removal of the once magnificent row of trees was demanded in the name of progress, the amputated stumps were unable to plead for themselves to be spared longer.— *Vol. iv.*

Topography and Landmarks of the Provincial Period

Opposite the burying-ground, on the east side of Long-Acre Street, lived Adino Paddock, who some years later set out the fine row of English elms which flourished down to our own day, a conspicuous ornament of the street. The trees were brought from England, and were thought to have been planted in 1762. They were cut down a few years ago, despite the indignant protest of the press and a large number of prominent citizens. Shurtleff, *Description of Boston*, p. 368, has a chapter on "Paddock's Mall." — *Vol. ii.*

Campestris had a decidedly poor opinion of most of the American elms in his vicinity, but had a great respect and admiration for the Old Elm, whose acquaintance he had been privileged to enjoy from the time when, as a sapling, he was first settled on Boston Common by his sponsor, John Hancock; and this noted tree, the Oldest Inhabitant of the Common up to the time of his death, in 1876, was a living example proving that the Americana family can produce noble trees of the first rank.

This celebrated tree had attained his full growth in 1722, and exhibited marks of old age in 1792; and Campestris sympathized and lamented over the misfortunes which befell him in his later years. He went through the great gale of 1815 unscathed, but nearly met his death by a storm in 1832. In 1860, much to the grief and sorrow of Campestris, he was seriously dismembered in a gale; and after experiencing more misfortunes during a storm in September, 1869, was finally destroyed Feb. 16, 1876, when he was broken off near the ground.[1]

In the seventies the first serious interference with the surface of the Common was made by City Forester Galvin, in the re-

[1] *The facts noted above are taken from Asa Gray's chapter iii., vol. i., in Memorial History of Boston. A portrait of the Old Elm is shown opposite page* 81. *For further information see Appendix IV.*

grading of Powder House Hill to afford a site for the Soldiers' Monument; and after the outlay of a most extravagant sum of money, spent in obliterating all the natural outlines and features of the hill and creating a purely artificial surface, which he dubbed the most beautiful spot in America, the poor old hill could hardly have recognized herself.

It was in the fall of the year 1896 that I first became intimately acquainted with Campestris Ulm, while the upheaval of the Common along Tremont and Boylston Street malls was taking place, and the whole surface of the Parade Ground was torn up to bury an enormous amount of excavation from the Subway. Sore at heart over the devastation of the present, and apprehensive of the future, I found in him a sympathetic and congenial friend.

One hundred and sixteen years had elapsed since Campestris Ulm had been settled upon his site by Governor John Hancock. He was now a most picturesque tree in the prime of life, and exemplified all the stateliness and grandeur which he gave promise of when a sapling, and later as a young tree. No knight of the Middle Ages carried himself more nobly than Campestris Ulm, with one branch projecting over Beacon Street and another across the mall, as if to guard the citadel of the American Athens from the despotism of the East and the materialism of the West.

His upright trunk, rising from a secure base, was already assuming the dignity and hoary roughness of age; his limbs, in part, stretched out horizontally, and others tended upward, with an appearance of strength to their very extremities, supporting a well-balanced head, which in spring was covered with a beautiful bloom, of a dark crimson color, followed later by a dense foliage of small, deep green leaves. At times he received and reflected grand masses of light, that were worthy of the best of his kin. Botanists have accused my old friend of being polygamous. Whether this is true or not, our intercourse has never been disturbed on that account. As years went by, my respect and admiration for the character of my

LAFAYETTE MALL

North from West Street

old friend deepened. Prompted by him, I was led to take an interest in the lives of his sponsors, Governor and Madam Hancock, and in the indoor and outdoor life of that famous mansion on Beacon Hill; to inform myself of the upbuilding that had taken place on the hill since the land of Copley was mostly wild and covered with barberry bushes; to picture with his aid the changes that had taken place in the surface of the Common since the time of the Revolution; and to ascertain the time of tree-planting, and by whom. He was familiar with nearly every person of note in the old town since the time of his settlement. Our tastes, therefore, were very much alike, and I never tired of his society.

We often conferred together about the care that the Common has received in the past. We both agreed that the grounds could not possibly have been cared for under a worse system than that which is described by Shurtleff in his *History of Boston*, and Edward Stanwood in *Memorial History of Boston*.

All the walks in the enclosure of the Common have had trees set out at their edges since the adoption of the city charter, it being the pride of the Committees of each year to do something to beautify and adorn this favorite holiday resort of the Citizens.[1]

The Citizens are indebted to the great energy and good taste of the several Committees on the Common and the Public Squares, to the City Engineers and to the Superintendents, who have usually been designated as the City Foresters.[2]

The subsequent changes have been, for the most part, the work of landscape gardeners of the elected sort — men who think inequalities of surface are to be removed, who enjoy a straight path more than a crooked one, who regard black asphalt as an appropriate material for a park walk, who like to line paths with fence rails painted green, who make trees picturesque by sawing off the limbs in such a way as to make the mutilation most conspicuous. Notwithstanding all this, the Common was too beautiful to be spoiled by years of official disfigurement.[3]

[1] *Shurtleff, Memorial History of Boston, pp.* 328-366.
[2] *Ibid, p.* 355.
[3] *Edward Stanwood, Memorial History of Boston, vol. iv.*

The pith of the matter, Campestris declared, was that the best results could never reasonably be expected from changeable boards of selectmen, or from mayors, aldermen, and superintendents; that most everything done was a compromise, resulting in poor art. I agreed with Campestris, and informed him of an instance in point that came under my own observation in a suburban town. A committee of nine were selected in town meeting to decide on a design and the placing of a soldiers' monument on their Common. On this Committee were two who dominated the rest, both self-willed and positive in their ideas and tastes. One was determined that the monument should be Gothic in design; the other, equally determined in favor of Egyptian. Neither was willing to yield; but the versatile architect employed designed a hybrid the like of which had never been seen before, and which proved acceptable to both.

The Transit Commission made three serious errors in the manner in which the Subway was constructed, as far as the interests of the Common were concerned, assuming that their original location within the limits of the Common, which later experience has shown to be unnecessary, was not also a mistake in the beginning.

In their first report, they recommended that a large part of the excavation from the Subway should be used in raising the surface of the Common adjacent to Charles Street, the necessity for which, for both æsthetic and sanitary considerations, they state has long been apparent; and furthermore, they add (what was evidently of much more vital importance in their minds), at a saving in the cost of the Subway.

The western slopes of Powder House Hill, Flagstaff Hill, and Ridge Hill were at that time natural and pleasing to the eye. The low land near Charles Street could have been easily graded with a very moderate amount of soil; but the Commission proceeded to bury the enormous amount of sixty to seventy thousand cubic yards of earth, defacing nearly the

whole surface of the Parade Ground, where one-tenth part would have been ample for sanitary and æsthetic reasons— as unjustifiable as it would be for a man to put putty on his cheeks to improve the appearance of his face. This was the most serious mistake they made, because so difficult to undo.

The second mistake was in placing the roof of the Subway so near the surface of Tremont Street mall that it was impossible to grow there trees of any size. If any citizens have in their minds that the row of trees east of the mall is ever going to rival the famous trees of the olden time and place new laurels on the brow of Lafayette, let them dismiss the idea from their minds at once. It is a vain hope; those good little trees have seen their best days already. They are doomed to die young; they have no deep drainage provided, and hardly depth of soil enough for a good-sized flower-pot, and all along the dreary granolithic pavement the roof of the Subway is so near the surface that there is no opportunity to curtail its limits, even with grass.

The third mistake they made was in not carrying out the admirable designs made for the Subway coverings by Edmund M. Wheelwright, and leaving out all the accessories which he recommended, from short-sighted and petty motives of economy, thus spoiling what was capable of being made a pleasure to the eye and a credit to the city.

In *Municipal Architecture in Boston, from designs by Edmund M. Wheelwright, Part II*, there is an admirable article by C. Howard Walker, as follows: —

Preliminary sketches were made by Mr. Wheelwright as City Architect, but the buildings were constructed from plans made later by the architectural firm of which he is a member.

The coverings for the stairways to the Subway Stations upon Boston Common presented a peculiarly difficult problem. It was not enough that the isolated buildings should be acceptable in design; it was essential that to a number of small and comparatively inconspicuous units should be given a complete architectural effect. These units were but a series of utilitarian buildings of the lowest organic type, mere oblong coverings for

holes in the ground whose location even was determined by the engineering construction.

As appears from the preliminary sketches here shown, the problem was approached in the only possible rational manner. There was a long, narrow, nearly level mall, at either end of which the coverings were to be grouped. The natural surroundings, except for the background of trees, gave no assistance. A satisfactory architectural effect had to be gained entirely by artificial means. Picturesqueness was out of the question: in the first place, the units were too simple and too small; and in the second place, instead of variety, there was only deadly monotony of conditions. The architects sought therefore to gain monumental effect by formal disposition of masses, by uniting the small units by colonnades or by series of lamps or posts; by the use of balustrades or walls; and by flights of steps. The coverings at Park street chanced to be so disposed that they could be arranged in pairs; and one of the early sketches shows a colonnade used to group together each of these pairs. As it was found necessary to reduce the number of stairway risers by lowering the grade of the malls, a semicircular series of broad steps was suggested at the Park street corner, while seats, posts for lamps, and other architectural features completed the assembling of the different parts of the design at this the most important end of the mall. Here, too, on the axis between the two pairs of coverings, the Brewer Fountain was to be placed, an approach to it being given by a short flight of steps. This would have been an effective and rational location for this fountain, which in its present situation appears to have been dropped there by accident. At the corner of Tremont and Boylston streets, under conditions even less favorable, the architects strove by similar means to bring together the isolated units. In fact, every expedient which would enlarge the apparent area of architectural treatment was applied to this problem.

The Commission, however, failed to recognize the essential characteristics of the architects' designs; none of the accessories which such conditions required were authorized, and not until the designs had been reduced to their lowest terms were they finally accepted. The buildings thus became merely a series of stone coverings for unrelated holes in the surface of the mall. Public criticism at once recognized the inadequacy of this solution of the problem. The criticism of these buildings, if analyzed, will be found to be based upon their lack of arrangement and haphazard appearance, quite as much as upon their severity. The fragments of an excellent design have been built, and necessarily give testimony to the fact that they were merely parts of an unaccomplished whole. It might have been as well, poor as would have been their effect in such a situation, if mere pavilions of iron and glass, adaptable to any needs as far as covering

AMERICANA AND CAMPESTRIS

capacity is concerned, had been here constructed; for the very formality and monumental character, both in form and material, of the present buildings was suggested by and related to the scheme which was discarded by the Commission. The buildings themselves are of excellent proportions, and in the details of mouldings and other features refinement and skill are shown. The responsibility for the vulgar over-sized black letters which designate the entrances and exits rests with the street railway company which has leased the Subway.

In the first report of the Transit Commission, p. 19, is this paragraph:

The Commission is confident that citizens will soon recognize in these substantial improvements, which will permanently add to the beauty and salubrity of the Common and Public Garden, some compensations for the sacrifices they have made in having the Subway built under the Boylston and Tremont street malls.

The results described above are the fulfilment. It is evident that economy of construction and temporary inconvenience to the public, as well as to traders along the streets, were of much more importance to them than a permanent and satisfactory result to the eye.

I had been reading about the Social Unrest, and the arguments in favor of greater equality and fraternity had made a deep impression on my mind. Eager to expound the new doctrine, I repaired to the bole of my old friend. I had often noticed a mean-looking, sickly Americana Ulm standing close to Campestris and within the sphere of his action, their roots intermingling, and for whom my old friend showed a great aversion. His age was uncertain, possibly fifty years. On the opposite side and close to Campestris stood a little Runt of a tree, recently set out by some committee to take the place of Campestris at his death. My manner was not quite so respectful as usual. I made known to him, rather abruptly, that it was generally admitted by those best qualified to decide that the world owed every tree a living; that, as trees multiplied, the available land grew scarcer and scarcer; that it was mani-

festly unjust for him longer to enjoy exclusively the most desirable site on the Common; and that I had noticed he was behaving very badly towards these neighbors,— Americana and the little Runt,— and requested his reasons therefor.

Campestris replied that he had wronged no tree by occupying the site that he had stood on for so many years, which was vacant when his sponsor settled him there; that ever since his family had emerged from the bog they had always asserted their right to as much ground in the open as was covered by the spread of their branches; that this was indispensable for his proper nourishment and best development; and that he would share it with no tree.

I rejoined that those that were fortunate should share their good fortune with those that were less so; that Americana was not to blame for crowding so close to him — that it was the fault of the Committee that had placed him there. I urged him again to behave like a brother to Americana.

Campestris retorted that Americana had bedevilled the Committee with his airs and graces, and prevailed upon them to place him where they did; that if he would persuade them to remove him to a distance he might consent to be a second cousin twice removed — nothing nearer.

I then proposed arbitration, but was informed by Campestris that, as there were twenty times as many of Americana's kin on the Common as there were of his own, it was out of the question for him to agree to it, even if he was otherwise disposed, which he was not.

As for the little Runt, set out to occupy his place in the future, he considered him for the present beneath his notice. My vexation, at this stage of the interview, getting the better of me, I ventured to remark that if he were not careful he would get himself disliked; but regretted it immediately, for Campestris had shown increasing irritation and now stood more erect than usual, becoming violently agitated, his head swaying back and forth, his limbs shaking, his tufted shoots becoming more and more tangled, and his leaves fluttering

ERECHTHEUM

wildly. Fearing an explosion, I discreetly and hurriedly withdrew to a safe distance from that perverse old tree, followed by the reflection of angry masses of light. The language of trees is difficult to understand in the vernacular, and it is only by long practice that I am able to attempt a rather free translation of Campestris's words, to this effect:

"I will not divide and I will not arbitrate, I will not be a brother to that mean sucker under any conditions whatever."

J. P. Mahaffy and other writers have described the group of buildings on the Acropolis of Grecian Athens as the most perfect and beautiful that the world has yet seen.

Two of the most prominent and beautiful buildings in this group were the Parthenon, the Temple of the Virgin Goddess Athena, and the Erechtheum, dedicated to both Athena Polias, the guardian of the city, and Pandrosos, the goddess of dew.

Beacon Hill and the adjacent Common bear the same relation to the Athens of America that the Acropolis did to Ancient Athens.

Campestris has enjoyed since 1795 the simple and dignified front of Bulfinch's State House, corresponding to the Parthenon; but on account of intervening buildings, he is prevented from enjoying the later addition, as it tails back on the hill.

No building on Beacon Hill, since the Hancock Mansion was torn down, exactly corresponds to the Erechtheum; but Campestris, in common with other inhabitants, for thirty-six years has enjoyed the privilege of looking on the "Architectural Gem," designed by an unknown American Ictinus, shown opposite page 68. Placed in a most conspicuous position, near the West Street entrance to the Common from Tremont Street, it is adorned with a particolored slate roof, with varying refined color-schemes of successive aldermanic committees, and is a most admirable example of American jig-saw architecture of the later seventies, faintly reminiscent of the indigenous wooden architecture of the Alps.

I submitted the account of the errors in commission and omission of the Transit Commission to Campestris, who approved it in the main, but remarked that to criticise past errors was easy, but of little value unless joined to some helpful suggestions for the future. With some diffidence, I thereupon added the following: First, that the Commonwealth should be respectfully reminded that Boston Common was created for the benefit of the inhabitants of Boston, and not to be given to a greedy corporation for an underground station for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Commonwealth. Secondly, that the city should carry out the excellent designs of Mr. Wheelwright, and extend the architectural treatment around the Subway Entrances, all along the line of the Tremont Street mall. Thirdly, that those having authority should cherish to their utmost those few famous old English elms that have survived the ravage and neglect of the past; that the roots of no neighboring trees should be allowed to interfere within the limits of the spread of the branches of these veterans; that they should abandon the practice of setting out young trees close to the old ones to take their places when dead (about as sensible as to place a lusty young fellow alongside the old man's bowl containing nourishment enough for only one); that the practice of cutting off branches of old trees, unless entirely dead, on the specious plea of danger to the public, should be abandoned; and lastly, although at the risk of being branded as an unbalanced sentimentalist, that the wrong done the Parade Ground should be rectified and the surface restored approximately as it was before being defaced by the Transit Commission.

Observing the refining and elevating influence of my old friend in particular, and of old trees in general, it occurred to me that the value of old trees of the first rank, to a community like Boston, was little appreciated, and that if ten righteous old trees were judiciously distributed within the limits of the town, it might be saved, even if it was as wicked as Sodom

AN "ARCHITECTURAL GEM"!

and Gomorrah. The financial district being specially wicked, three at least would be needed there; and after careful examination of the map I concluded that Post Office Square, contiguous to that shrine of Mammon, afforded the most available site. I even went so far as to examine the plan of the Square and the location of the underground pipes. I realized that they also would need protection, and went up to Copley Square and examined the large stone posts in front of the Library, which seemed well suited for the purpose! These, together with good sizable round bronze rails, would afford a sort of standing invitation to teamsters and chauffeurs to bump, and bump, and bump again. It then occurred to me that further consideration had better be postponed until some missionary work had been done.

I had not seen my old friend for some time, when one day I visited him and was surprised to note the alteration in his appearance. He seemed to have aged years in as many months. He also seemed low-spirited, and as if he were afflicted with all those infirmities described by the rustic rhyme in *Evelyn's Silva:*

> The Calf, the Wind-shock, and the Knot,
> The Canker, Scab, Sap, and Rot.

I sympathetically inquired the cause of so much affliction, and was informed that he lately had been greatly disturbed by the borings for the new Cambridge Tunnel; that when he looked down upon those pygmies who arrogate to themselves the title of lords of creation, whose highest ambition is to build a continuous city from Boston to New York and bring the bulk of that vast population into Park Street Station of an afternoon to shop and buy candy, and whose capacity for mischief is infinite; and furthermore, when he took into consideration the probable effect of diverting those underground springs on which he had thriven for so many years and which had become indispensable to his life, even his iron heart, that

had carried him through the great September gale, failed him and he felt that his lifework was nearly done.

I tried to comfort him. I informed him that the refining and elevating influence of old trees was appreciated, even in Boston; that a citizen[1] had lately died whom he must have often noticed, as his house was right across the way, who had been so strongly attracted by the sight and knowledge of his virtues for many years that he had left the bulk of his large fortune for the benefit of Campestris and his kindred trees; and that he was almost the first citizen to recognize that the interest of the trees and the gratification of the eye were of as much importance to the welfare of a community as religious, charitable, or educational institutions.

I informed him that possibly some system of irrigation might be devised to provide him with a substitute for the deep springs; but he refused to be comforted, and asserted that Boston no longer cared for old trees.

With this interview, I bring this brief biography of the life of my old and respected friend to a close.

I trust that his fears are not justified, and that he may for many years continue to inhabit the site that he has dignified so long. But when that melancholy time shall come that Campestris Ulm is no more, and his ashes are scattered to the four winds, I think it can be truthfully claimed and not gainsaid that, of all the inhabitants, vegetable or animal, tree or man, the lives of few have surpassed his in benefits conferred upon his adopted town.

[1] *There died in September, 1908, a citizen of Boston, Mr. George Francis Parkman, who had lived for many years in a house overlooking the Common. In a codicil to his will disposing of an ample fortune he bequeathed to the City of Boston a fund, found to exceed $5,000,000, "the income of which is to be applied to the maintenance and improvement of the Common and the Parks now existing." In the body of the will it is seen that the benefactor planned his bequest "to the City of Boston in the hope and expectation that Boston Common shall never be diverted from its present use as a public park for the benefit and enjoyment of its citizens."—Boston Common, by M. A. De Wolfe Howe.*

GEORGE FRANCIS PARKMAN

Taken in 1864

Courtesy of the Boston Athenæum

APPENDIX

I

President Quincy's account of the difficulties of Harvard College with John Hancock, treasurer. Hancock Mansion. Defence of Hancock by James Spear Loring. The Essex Junto, etc. Personal appearance of Hancock, and an account of the life of Madam after the death of John Hancock.

[*From The Hundred Boston Orators, by James Spear Loring, pp.* 86-9.]

Mr. Hancock married, at Fairfield, Conn., Dorothy, daughter of Edmund Quincy, of Boston, Sept. 4, 1775. He had a daughter, who died in infancy, at Philadelphia, 1776; and one son, John George Washington, who was killed at Milton, when skating on the ice, Jan. 27, 1787, aged nine years. He left no descendant. The quaint conceit of Lord Bacon may be applied to Hancock: "Surely, man shall see the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men, who have sought to express the images of their minds where those of their bodies have failed; so the care of posterity is most in them that have no posterity."

In Quincy's *History of Harvard University*, appears a statement of the difficulties of the college with John Hancock, who was the treasurer from 1773 to 1777, which exhibits a dark shade in his history; — not that he was wilfully dishonorable, but he could not be aroused to an adjustment of financial duties towards the institution; and Rev. Dr. Gray, of Roxbury, relates, that Dr. Samuel Cooper and Dr. William Gordon agreed that, at an overseers' meeting, the former should introduce a motion for the immediate settlement of the treasurer's accounts, and which was seconded by the latter. But Dr. Gordon spoke so plainly his mind of the singular neglect of the treasurer, though so often urged to do it, that the manner was thought by Dr. Cooper, who was perfectly mild and polite in everything, to be as gross; and therefore he forbore to utter a syllable upon the subject, and it passed off at the meeting in perfect silence. This circumstance so greatly offended Gov. Hancock, that he removed immediately from Jamaica Plain to his residence in Boston, and ceased all future intercourse with Dr. Gordon.

No name stands emblazoned on the records of the corporation, remarks Quincy, as a benefactor, with more laudatory epithets, than that of John Hancock. But his title to this distinction must depend upon the view which is taken of his first subscription of £500. In July, 1767, when no motives of policy influenced the corporation, this donation is stated to be

"the proposed gift of Thomas Hancock;" his "signified intention to subscribe, towards the restoration of the library, the sum of five hundred pounds sterling, the completion of which was prevented by his sudden death;" the act of John Hancock is recorded as a demonstration of his generous affection to the college, and as having done honor to the memory of his uncle, by voluntarily fulfilling his noble intention. "In the donation-book of the college, collected by order of the corporation in 1773," the year in which Mr. Hancock, as treasurer, took his seat in that board, and when he was at the height of his popularity, this gift is recorded on one page as exclusively "the gift of John Hancock;" and on the next but one, as "his generous fulfilment of the intentions of his late uncle, the Honorable Thomas Hancock." It was generally regarded, and probably by Mr. Hancock, as an indispensable obligation; and it would have been almost impossible for a young man ambitious of popularity and power, on receiving an estate, estimated at £70,000 sterling, from the bounty of a relative, to refuse to fulfil "his signified intention" to subscribe £500 in favor of an institution which every man of influence in the province was laboring to raise from its ruins.

If the subscription be placed to the account of its avowed origin, the good will of Thomas Hancock, the college was indebted to the bounty of John Hancock, as stated in the records of the college, "for a curious dipping needle," and, after that event, for the sum of £54 4s. sterling, being the excess of the cost of the books ordered by the corporation beyond the £500 derived from the good will of his uncle; for "a full-length picture of that benefactor," and also for a set of the most elegant carpets to cover the floor of the library, the apparatus and philosophy chambers, and covering the walls of the latter with a rich paper; "for an Account of London and its Environs, in six volumes," and "curious Coralline in its natural bed." The entire value of these donations certainly did not greatly exceed — and was probably less than — the actual loss sustained, according to the statement of treasurer Storer, his successor, "by Mr. Hancock's long denial of the rights of the college, and withholding its property." He says that "justice to a public institution, which he essentially embarrassed during a period of nearly twenty years," etc., requires a statement of the facts.

A very obvious apology for the delinquency of John Hancock is to be ascribed to the great financial distress of the Old Bay State, incident upon the war of the Revolution, rendering it almost impossible to command funds for the liquidation of large demands, until long after the peace of 1783. Did not treasurer Hancock secure an estate on Merchant's-row, by mortgage, to Harvard College, Dec. 29, 1785? — and, in two years after his decease, did not his nephew, John Hancock, Esq., make a payment of

nine years' interest due the college? — and Dec. 13, 1802, did not he discharge the payment of the principal due, and the interest in full to that date, as appears by the records in the office of the Suffolk Register of Deeds? But treasurer Storer complains that the heirs refused to pay compound interest, whereby the college was a loser of five hundred and twenty-six dollars. This was a very natural decision of the heirs, but we will not censure the memory of Gov. Hancock for this act of the heirs, which was their legal right.

[*From The Hundred Boston Orators, by James Spear Loring, p.* 104.]

In 1780 Hancock was elected a member of the convention that framed a State constitution, of which James Bowdoin was president. At that time the people of the State were divided into two political parties, with one of which the popularity of John Hancock was unbounded; with the other, James Bowdoin was the favorite. "In the Hancock party," says Josiah Quincy, "were included many of the known mal-contents with Harvard College,— men who had no sympathy for science or classical education, and who were ready to oppose any proposition for the benefit of that institution." Is not this a sweeping denunciation, too severe to credit? On the contrary, the party of which James Bowdoin may be considered the exponent "included all the active friends of that seminary, and was chiefly composed of men regarded by the opposite faction with jealousy and fear, to some of whom Hancock then gave the sobriquet of 'The Essex Junto,'— the delegates from that county being among the most talented and efficient members of the convention." Would it be uncandid to concede that the Hancock party embraced a few friends of Harvard College? Did not Gov. Hancock prove, by his public messages, the paternal interest of his heart in the welfare of the college? Does not President Quincy prove it by his own statement, where he relates that "Gov. Hancock was induced to allude to the necessity of legislative aid, in his speech to the General Court, in May, 1791, and to introduce, by a special message, the memorial of Samuel Adams and others, a committee of the overseers and corporation, of the necessity of making up by the arrearages of the usual grants to college officers,— without which, they averred, that 'either the assessment on the students must be augmented, or some of the institutions of the college must fail of support'? After great debates, the subject was again referred to the next session of the Legislature;" and on another occasion, in 1781, did not Hancock remark, that the college was, "in some sense, the parent and nurse of the late happy revolution in this Commonwealth"?

On the adoption of the State constitution at that date, John Hancock

was elected governor, which station he occupied until his decease, with the exception of the years 1785 and 6, when his great rival, James Bowdoin, became his successor.

[*From The Hundred Boston Orators, by James Spear Loring, pp.* 105-7.]

One who saw John Hancock in June, 1782, relates that he had the appearance of advanced age. He had been repeatedly and severely afflicted with the gout; probably owing in part to the custom of drinking punch,—a common practice, in high circles, in those days. As recollected at this time, Gov. Hancock was nearly six feet in height, and of thin person, stooping a little, and apparently enfeebled by disease. His manners were very gracious, of the old style of dignified complaisance. His face had been very handsome. Dress was adapted quite as much to be ornamental as useful. Gentlemen wore wigs when abroad, and, commonly, caps when at home. At this time, about noon, Hancock was dressed in a red velvet cap, within which was one of fine linen. The latter was turned up over the lower edge of the velvet one, two or three inches. He wore a blue damask gown lined with silk, a white stock, a white satin embroidered waistcoat, black satin small-clothes, white silk stockings, and red morocco slippers. It was a general practice, in genteel families, to have a tankard of punch made in the morning, and placed in a cooler when the season required it. At this visit, Hancock took from the cooler, standing on the hearth, a full tankard, and drank first himself, and then offered it to those present. His equipage was splendid, and such as is not customary at this day. His apparel was sumptuously embroidered with gold and silver and lace, and other decorations fashionable amongst men of fortune of that period; and he rode, especially upon public occasions, with six beautiful bay horses, attended by servants in livery. He wore a scarlet coat, with ruffles on his sleeves, which soon became the prevailing fashion; and it is related of Dr. Nathan Jacques, the famous pedestrian, of West Newbury, that he paced all the way to Boston, in one day, to procure cloth for a coat like that of John Hancock, and returned with it under his arm, on foot.

Hancock was hospitable. There might have been seen at his table all classes, from grave and dignified clergy, down to the gifted in song, narration, anecdote, and wit, with whom "noiseless falls the foot of Time, that only treads on flowers."

Madam Hancock gratified the ambition of her husband, in presiding with so much graceful ease at his hospitable board and in the social circle, that her presence ever infused an enlivening charm. So famed was Hancock for hospitality, that his mansion was often thronged with visitors;

and frequently did Madam Hancock send her maids to milk their cows on Boston Common, early in the morning, to replenish the exhausted supply of the previous evening. On July 28, 1796, widow Dorothy Hancock was married, by Peter Thacher, D.D., to James Scott, the master of a London packet, formerly in the employ of the governor. She outlived Capt. Scott many years, and retained her mental faculties until near the close of life. She was a lady of superior education, and delightful powers of conversation.

Her last days were retired and secluded, in the dwelling No. 4 Federal-street, next the corner of Milton-place, in Boston; and those were most honored who received an invitation to her little supper-table. She spoke of other days with cheerfulness, and seldom sighed that they had gone. Her memory was tenacious of past times; and there were but few officers of the British army quartered in Boston whose personal appearance, habits, and manners, she could not describe with accuracy. Her favorite was Earl Percy, whose force encamped on Boston Common during the winter of 1774-5; and this nobleman, accustomed to all the luxuries of Old England, slept among his companions in arms in a tent on the Common, exposed to the severity of the weather as much as were they. The traces of those tents have been visible, to a very recent period, on the Common, when the grass was freshly springing from the earth, and the circles around the tents were very distinct. At the dawn of day, Madam Scott related, that Earl Percy's voice was heard drilling the regulars near the old mansion.

Madam Hancock had an opportunity, after the capture of Burgoyne, of extending her courtesies to the ladies of his army, while at Cambridge, under the treaty with Gates. They were gratefully received by the fair Britons, and ever remembered. When Lafayette was in Boston, during his last visit, in August, 1824, he made an early call on Madam Scott. Those who witnessed his hearty interview speak of it with admiration. The once youthful chevalier and the unrivalled belle met as if only a summer had passed since they had enjoyed social interviews in the perils of the Revolution. While they both were contemplating the changes effected by long time, they smiled in each other's faces, but no allusion was made to such an ungallant subject; yet she was not always so silent on this point. One of her young friends complimented her on her good looks. She laughingly replied, "What you have said is more than half a hundred years old. My ears remember it; but what were dimples once are wrinkles now." To the last day of life, she was as attentive to her dress as when first in the circles of fashion. "She would never forgive a young girl," she said, "who did not dress to please, nor one who seemed pleased with her dress." Madam Scott died in Boston, Feb. 3, 1830, aged 83 years.

Appendix

II

Extracts from Loudon, descriptive of the English Elm. Extracts from Nicholson, describing the English and American Elms.

[*From Arboretum et Fruticetum Britannicum, by J. C. Loudon, vol. iii., pp.* 1373-4.]

Description, etc. The elms are long-lived trees, with hard wood; rugged, and sometimes corky, bark; and zigzag, somewhat slender, branches. The leaves are alternate, stalked, deciduous, in general serrated and harsh; unequal at the base, and bearing tufts of hairs at the axils of the primary veins. The flowers are earlier than the leaves, tufted, copious, and dark red; the capsules are pale, chaffy, and light, serving as a wing to the seed, which is often imperfect. (See *Smith's Engl. Flora*, ii., p. 19.) The roots of young plants, in some of the species, are of leathery toughness, very strong, of considerable length and suppleness. The commoner, and perhaps all, the kinds increase rapidly in the number and the size of their roots and branches. *U. campestris* emits suckers from the older roots, which are extended under the surface of the soil; but this is not the case with *U. montana*. All have strong upright-growing trunks; but these vary, in the several kinds, in their diameters and length. The disposition of the branches relatively to the trunk, and to the head which they constitute, also varies exceedingly; and considerable difference of character prevails in the spray. For example, the tufted twigs of *U. campestris* bear very little resemblance to the prominent wand-like shoots which stand out thinly over the surface of the heads of young trees of *U. montana*, and all its varieties, or allied species; though in old trees the branches spread horizontally, and become drooping at their extremities. The tufted shoots of *U. campestris* assume occasionally the character of knots of entangled cord; and those tufts are called witch knots in some places. The character of the foliage is nearly the same in all the kinds of elm. That of *U. campestris* is very striking, from the smallness of the leaves, their number, the depth of their green, and their somewhat rounded figure: they remain on, also, till very late in the year. In *U. montana*, *U. m. glabra*, *U. americana*, and in some other kinds, the leaves are large, and sometimes pointed, with the marginal teeth more obvious, though, perhaps, only from the size of the disk; their green is lighter; and, in general, they fall off much earlier, than those of *U. campestris*. The different kinds vary, also, considerably in their time of leafing. The leaves of all the sorts have the base unequal, the margins doubly dentated, and are feather-nerved. The

flowers are always protruded before the leaves, and are disposed in small groups, which give a knotted character to the leafless branches, before they are fully developed; but which afterwards, from their colour, and their being supported on peduncles, look like little tufts of red fringe. The seeds of the elm, also, differ in the different kinds. "The inner bark of the elm is slightly bitter and astringent; but it does not appear to possess any important quality. The substance which exudes spontaneously from it is called ulmine." (Lindley's *Nat. Syst. of Bot.*, p. 179.) Small bladders which possess considerable vulnerary properties are found on the leaves of elms, particularly in warm countries. The elm is a native of Europe and North America, and part of Asia and Africa, extending as far south as the coast of Barbary, and as far north as Russia. The elm has been a well known tree since the time of the Romans; and of all the European trees, it is that which is most generally cultivated, and most commonly applied to agricultural purposes. The reasons for this preference, no doubt, are that its culture is extremely easy; its growth rapid; and that it will thrive in almost any soil or situation. It may also be transplanted, with comparative safety, at almost any age; and the timber will remain uninjured for a greater length of time than any other, when exposed to moisture. To counterbalance these advantages, the timber is very apt to shrink and warp, unless it be constantly moist, or the wood be kept for several years, after it is cut, before it is used. The tree, while in a living state, is also very often attacked by insects; and the timber is liable to become worm-eaten. Trees grown on a dry soil, and singly, make the best timber; but they are neither so large nor so long-lived as those grown in a moist soil, which form what is called in France *le bois gras*. Notwithstanding this, the elm will not thrive in very moist soil, as it is by no means an aquatic tree, like the alder.

[*From Arboretum et Fruticetum Britannicum, by J. C. Loudon, pp.* 1374-5.]

U. Campestris L. The English, field, or common small-leaved, Elm.

Varieties. These are very numerous, both in Britain and on the Continent; and most of them have been selected by nurserymen from their seed-beds. Any one, Bandrillart remarks, who has ever observed a bed of seedling elms, must have noticed that some have large leaves, and some small ones; some are early, and some late; some have smooth bark, and some rough bark; and some soft leaves, and others very rough ones. Some varieties are higher than others; the branches take now a vertical, and again a horizontal, direction. In short, while botanists describe, and cultivators sow, they will find that nature sports with their labours, and seems to

delight in setting at fault alike the science of the one, and the hopes of the other. This is always the case with plants that have been long submitted to the cultivation of man. The cares that are bestowed upon them, the different situations in which they are placed, and the different kinds of treatment which they receive, appear to change their native habits.

[*From Nicholson's Dictionary of Gardening, vol. iv., p.* 119.]

The common Elm (*U. campestris*) grows very rapidly in light, rich land; but its wood is proportionately light and porous, and of little value compared with that grown on strong land, which is of a closer and stronger texture, and at the heart will have the colour, and almost the hardness and weight, of iron.

U. americana delights in a low, humid situation. Its wood is inferior to that of the common Elm.

III

Extracts from Loudon on the pictorial aspect of trees. Extracts from Evelyn on the infirmities of trees.

[*From Arboretum et Fruticetum Britannicum, by J. C. Loudon, vol. i., pp.* 193, 194, 198, 199.]

The first quality in a tree which will strike a general observer, coming to the study with only a few notions relative to form, will be its bulk, or the space that it occupies in the landscape which meets his eye. This bulk, or magnitude, resolves itself into height and width; and the consideration which immediately follows is, the outline that the tree makes against the sky, or against any other object which appears behind it. The next points that will probably attract notice are, the colour of the tree, and the degree of brilliancy of the lights which appear on its masses. Subsequently, the attention may be drawn to the trunk of the tree: for example, to observe whether it appears to be adequate to the support of the head; whether the head appears equally balanced on it; and whether it stands perpendicularly, or obliquely, to the surface on which the tree grows. The next point is, to observe whether the head is open and airy, or compact; and the last, whether the general form of the tree is regular or irregular.

The different points, to which attention ought to be directed in the study of trees and shrubs as pictorial forms, are the following: — the height and breadth, or general magnitude, of the tree; the form and outline; the colour,

light, and shade; the position of the trunk and branches; the mode of growth; the mode of tufting; the leaves, and the spray and buds.

Every object in nature that forms a whole has some expression. If the nature of the object is unknown to the beholder, the expression which he assigns to it is analogous to that of some object with which he is already familiar; and he uses the same terms to describe its appearance as he would apply to such objects. For example, a tall, erect, regularly clothed tree will be described by the epithets stately, noble, or handsome; another kind of tree, with light airy foliage and a wavy stem, will be called graceful; and so on.

Character is some circumstance added to expression, which renders it more remarkable; and the circumstance which has this effect will generally be found to be the accidental exaggeration of some quality belonging to the natural expression of the object.

The expression of trees may be said to be of two kinds: that which proceeds from their organic influence on the eye as forms, without reference to their nature, and altogether apart from moral associations; and that in which moral associations are the principal cause of the expression.

The association of ideas connected with trees has given rise to what is called their moral and historical expression. A tree which is young and growing freely, is said to be in good health, and thriving; and one that is not growing freely, is said to be sickly. A tree with a thick trunk and spreading branches is said to be strong and vigorous; one with a tall and slender trunk, to be light and elegant; one with a bending, or serpentine, wavy-like stem, as we have before observed, to be graceful; a tree with upright growths, to be rigid; and one in which the branches and spray droop, to be mournful, or weeping.

[*From Evelyn's Silva, vol. ii., p.* 119.]

So many are the infirmities and sicknesses of trees, and indeed infirmities of the whole family of vegetables, that it were almost impossible to enumerate and make a just catalogue of them, and as difficult to find such infallible cures and remedies as could be desired, the effects arising from so many, and such different causes. Whenever, therefore, our trees and plants fail and come short of the fruit and productions we expect of them, (if the fault be not in our want of care,) it is certainly to be attributed to those infirmities to which all elementary things are obnoxious, either from the nature of the things themselves, and in themselves, or from some outward injury, not only through their being unskilfully cultivated by men, and exposed to hurtful beasts, but subject to be preyed upon and ruined by

the most minute and despicable insects, besides other casualties and accidents innumerable, according to the rustic rhime:

> The Calf, the Wind-shock, and the Knot,
> The Canker, Scab, Sap, and Rot.

Whatsoever is exitial to men is so to trees; for the aversion of which they had, of old, recourse to the Robigalia and other Gentile ceremonies: but no longer abused by charmers and superstitious fopperies, we have, in this chapter endeavoured to set down and prescribe the best and most approved remedies hitherto found out, as well natural as artificial.

And first, Weeds are to be diligently pulled up by hand after rain, whilst your seedlings are very young, and till they come to be able to kill them with shade and over-dripping; and then are you, for the obstinate, to use the hoe, fork, and spade, to extirpate Dog-grass, Bear-bind, &c.

And here, mentioning shade and dripping, though I cannot properly speak of them as infirmities of trees, they are certainly the causes of their unthriving till removed; such as that of the Oak and Mast-holme, Walnut, Pine, Fir, &c. the thickness of the leaves intercepting the sun and rain; whilst that of other trees is good, as the Elm, and several others.

Secondly, Suckers should be duly eradicated, and with a sharp spade dexterously separated from the mother-roots, and transplanted in convenient places for propagation, as the season requires.

Here note, That stocks raised from suckers, and employed in graffing fruit, are more disposed to produce suckers, than such as come from stones and pippins.

Thirdly, Fern is best destroyed by striking off the tops, as Tarquin did the heads of the Poppies: This done with a good wand or cudgel, at the decrease in the spring, and now and then in the summer, kills it, as also it does Nettle in a year or two, (but most infallibly by being eaten down, at its spring, by Scotch sheep,) beyond the vulgar way of mowing or burning, which rather increases than diminishes it.

Fourthly, Over much wet is to be drained by trenches, where it infests the roots of such kinds as require drier ground; but if a drip do fret into the body of a tree by the head, which will certainly decay it, cutting first the place smooth, stop and cover it with loam and hay, or a cerecloth, till a new bark succeed. But not only the wet, which is to be diverted by trenching the ground, is exitial to many trees, but their repletion of too abundant nourishment; and therefore sometimes there may be as much occasion to use the lancet, as venæsection to animals; especially if the hypothesis hold, of superfluous moisture's descent into the roots, to be reconcocted; but where, in case it be more copious than can be there elab-

THE OLD ELM ON THE COMMON

Blown down February 15, 1876

Courtesy of the Bostonian Society

orated, it turns to corruption, and sends up a tainted juice, which perverts the whole habit of the tree: In this exigence therefore, it were, perhaps, more advisable to draw it out by a deep incision, and to depend upon a new supply, than, upon confidence of correcting this evil quality by other medications, to let it perish. Other causes of their sickness, not always taken notice of, proceed from too liberal refreshments and over-watering in dry and scorching seasons, especially in nurseries: The water should therefore be fitly qualified, neither brackish, bitter, stagnant, nor putrid, sour, acrimonious, vitrolic, arenous, and gravelly, churlish, harsh, and lean (I mention them promiscuously); and whatever vicious quality they are perceptibly tinctured and impregnated with, they are by no means proper drink for plants. Wherefore a very critical examen of this so necessary an element (the very principle, as some think, and only nutriment of vegetables) is highly to be regarded, together with more than ordinary skill how to apply it: In order to which, the constitution and texture of plants and trees are philosophically to be considered; some affecting macerations with dung and other mixtures, (which I should not much commend,) others quite the contrary, the quick and running spring, dangerous enough, and worse than snow-water, which is not in some cases to be rejected: Generally, therefore, that were to be chosen, which passing silently through ponds and other receptacles, is exposed to the sun and air. This approaches nearest to that of rain dropping from the uberous cloud, and is certainly the most natural and nursing. As to the quantity, some plants require plentiful watering, others rather often, than all at once; all of them sucking it in by the roots for the most part, which are their mouths, and carrying it thence through all the canals, organs and members of the whole vegetable body, digested and qualified so as to maintain and supply their beings and growth, for the producing of whatever they afford for the use of man, and other living creatures.

IV

Descriptive of the Old Elm, taken from Shurtleff's Topographical and Historical Description of Boston.

Near the centre of the Common is situated the Great Tree, formerly one of the most noted objects of the town, and now a matter of great regard with the old inhabitants, who remember it among the earliest things that attracted their attention in early youth. But it will not do to pass by this noted elm with a simple mention of its place upon the Common. It has given shelter and shade to many generations that have passed away, and

has braved the storms and gales of centuries. As far back as tradition can go, it was standing in its majesty and beauty; but it has been reserved for the present generation to witness its almost entire destruction.

It is not often that an occurrence of such small importance as the destruction of a tree will cause so much sorrow and regret as did the dismemberment of the Great Tree on Boston Common, which occurred on the twenty-ninth of June, 1860, at half-past six o'clock in the evening. During the afternoon the appearance of the heavens had indicated a storm of no ordinary character, and indeed it came, and few will ever forget it, for the injury it has done.

The great fall of water, together with an uncommon gust of wind, broke down the limbs of many trees throughout the city, not even sparing those of Paddock's mall which had then so recently escaped the threatening axe. The Great Tree, the pride of Bostonians, and perhaps the most noted of its kind on the continent, suffered with the others; and after standing for centuries, the oldest of the traditionary relics of the days of our forefathers was in a few moments stripped of its beauty and its magnificent proportions, to linger out a maimed and displeasing existence, the evidence only of the violence of the storm which had so mutilated it. The amount of injury the tree sustained was great. Its beauty has been destroyed without hope of renewal; and it was the skill only of Mr. John Galvin, the city forester, that saved the part that now remains standing; he using eight cartloads of material to fill up the cavity in the tree.

As soon as the storm abated, the rumor that "The Old Elm Tree is blown down" spread rapidly through the city, causing hundreds of citizens to go to the spot and see for themselves. To their regret, they found the rumor but too true; and very many who visited the locality of the venerated tree secured portions of the fallen limbs, to preserve among the choicest of the relics of the olden time.

Although the tree had attained a great age, and uncommon size, it was more for its beautiful proportions and graceful limbs than for age or size that it gained its notoriety with those who had paid particular attention to trees; and the associations connected with its history will always keep it in remembrance. Upon its largest limbs, now gone, it has been supposed that some of the early executions in the colony took place, and it is certain that during the revolutionary struggles of America this tree was one of the places of constant resort of the Sons of Liberty, who frequently caused it to be illuminated with lanterns on evenings of rejoicing and on festal occasions. It also served the purpose of exhibitions of popular feeling and indignation, for many has been the Tory who has been hung in effigy from its branches. Perhaps on this account it acquired the name "Liberty

Tree," which it bore in 1784 (the tree originally bearing the name having been taken down), as it is designated on a map of Boston engraved that year. Very near this tree occurred, on the third of July, 1728, the duel between Benjamin Woodbridge and Henry Phillips, alluded to in a previous chapter; and beneath its branches have been enacted many a scene of youthful valor, in days long past, on the holidays of Election and Independence.

It would be difficult to assign to the tree even an approximate age; for, like the good old ladies so often read of, it has kept its own secret locked up closely within its own heart. It has been known, however, as far back as tradition can go, and is represented upon the oldest map of the town known to exist, and which was engraved in the year 1722,[1] ninety-two years after the settlement of the peninsula, and then was of sufficient size to have attained distinction. It is reasonable to believe that it was growing before the arrival of the first colonists. A tradition has existed in the Hancock family, passed down by Mrs. Lydia Hancock, wife of Thomas, who built the house where his nephew, the governor, dwelt, that her grandfather, Hezekiah Henchman, set out the tree when he was a boy, which would have been about two hundred years ago, as his father, Daniel, the old schoolmaster, left Boston as early as 1674. Other accounts from the Henchman family give the honor to the old schoolmaster, who wielded the sword as well as the birches,— for he commanded the famous artillery company, and served in King Philip's War in 1675 The last tradition says that the tree was set out as a shelter for the company. If this was the case, he was more provident than his successors, none of whom would have planted a tree — though as Dumbiedikes said, it would grow while men were sleeping — with such a long prospective view ahead, and in such a place as the tree has grown in. Besides, more than one hundred and ninety rings can easily be counted in the great branch that was broken off in 1860, and which must certainly be several years younger than the tree itself, which alone carries back that portion of it to a period as early as the Hancock tradition can with certainty go; and, if any reliance can be placed in traditional lore, which is extremely doubtful, we must believe that the Quakers and perhaps Ann Hibbens, the martyr of the witch delusion, were hung from its bough, the former in October, 1659, and the latter in June, 1656, when it certainly must have been more than twenty-six years old, and if so was growing in 1630.

The first measurement of the great tree of which any account was made was taken in 1825, at the request of some person residing in New York.

[1] *On Bonner's Map of Boston in* 1722, *besides the Old Elm, two other trees are shown near Park Street, but of what variety there is no mention made in Shurtleff's History. They were undoubtedly short-lived and of little value.*

Appendix

The dimensions were accurately noted on the second of April, 1825, and were as follows: Height sixty-five feet, circumference twenty-one feet eight inches at two feet six inches from the ground, and the branches extended in diameter eighty-six feet. At the time, it was said, that "this pride of our Common is pronounced by judges to be as handsome in form as it is large in size and venerable in age, and it may be worth the remark, that notwithstanding all the buffeting it has received from storms and hurricanes for more than a century, its original beauty and symmetry have not been impaired, although it has at times lost many of its branches." At this time a gold medal was offered for the best painted picture of it, and several were made, and in May the medal was awarded and sent to Mr. H. C. Pratt, the successful competitor.

In 1855, the tree was very accurately measured by the City Engineer, who recorded the following dimensions: Height, seventy-two feet six inches; girth, one foot above the ground, twenty-two feet six inches; girth, four feet above the ground, seventeen feet; average diameter of greatest extent of branches, one hundred and one feet. Other earlier measurements, by George B. Emerson, Esq., and Prof. Asa Gray, in 1844, show that the tree had not ceased to grow as long as it stood. The latest measurement, taken by the writer a few months before its mutilation, gave twenty-four feet girth at the ground, eighteen feet three inches at three feet, and sixteen feet six inches at five feet, showing an increase of only about five inches in girth in sixteen years.

The storm of 1860, which so mutilated the tree, was not the only storm which injured its great branches. In the summer of 1832 it was much injured by the violence of a storm, and its largest limbs were so much cleft asunder as to allow them to rest their branches upon the ground; but they were subsequently, at much cost and labor, restored to their former position, and were sustained in place by iron bolts and braces. By the gale of September, 1869, a large limb, measuring forty-two inches in circumference, was torn from this tree, thus gradually destroying its original beautiful proportions.

Many of the older inhabitants can well remember when there was a cavity in its trunk sufficiently large to allow boys to secrete themselves within it. This was very noticeable in 1755, when a picture was made of it in needlework; but this has almost entirely disappeared, being partially closed up by the good treatment and care which have been given to the tree, and partly from the raising of the soil at its roots. This opening was on the northwest side, and there is also a smaller one, now apparent, on the westerly side.

When the cows were tenants of the Common, having acquired the right

of pasturage by a vote of the townsmen, passed in May, 1660, empowering the Selectmen "to order the improvement and feeding of their common by such cattle as they shall deem meet," they were accustomed to shelter themselves beneath the wide spreading branches of the Great Tree from the burning sun, and to cool their heated hoofs in the damp marshy ground around its prominent and far stretching roots. Consequently the immediate proximity to the trunk of the tree was extremely muddy, and not fit to be a proper place for promenade and shelter in inclement weather for the pedestrians. Many attempts were made, in vain, to expel the quadrupeds from their old haunts, which the right of eminent-domain, and the annual tax of two dollars, had for many years secured to them; but they kept their place, and enjoyed their rights and liberties. The new state of things, when Boston became a city by an act of the legislature, signed by Gov. Brooks, on the twenty-third of February, 1822, adopted by the townsmen on the fourth of March of the same year, and announced by the proclamation, completely subjected the poor beasts, as well as their owners, to the mercies of a new régime. The gentle Phillips, the first mayor, who was elected to office on the sixteenth of April, 1822, and inaugurated on the first of May, being as much a lover of true liberty as his gifted son, let the creatures alone during his twelve months service in the curule chair; and it was not until the iron will of his successor, Judge Quincy, who was transferred from the bench of the Municipal Court to the Municipal Chair, raised the price of pasturage from two dollars to ten, that a visible change was made in the quality and quantity of stragglers upon the Common. It remained, however, for the third mayor, Hon. Mr. Otis, noted for his politeness, and winning ways, to remove the trouble, as it was considered by those who were wont to perambulate the numerous by-paths and byways of the old common land, or cow commons, as it might have been called in the days of our forefathers. On the tenth of May, 1830, the order was passed that banished the four legged gentry from their green pasture, and shady retreat under the old elm. Consequent to this came the raising up of the ground-level around the foot of the tree, and the conversion of the marshy soil into dry land. Heaps of material were thrown upon the widely extending roots, and the damp places were made dry; and with these changes the hole in the tree almost disappeared, and very nearly the old tree, our ancient friend, came to terminating its vegetative existence; for its growth was checked, and its once luxuriant foliage began to wilt, and exhibit unequivocal signs of death. The subsequent removal from the tree of this ungenial mass of debris which had been placed around its roots made room for the good soil which replaced the poor stuff, and again the Great Tree began to show its pristine vigor; and the filling up of the low places

between the great roots, together with the healing process of nature, diminished the apparent size of the great hole in the trunk, which had so often been the hiding-place of boys, in their sports and pastimes.

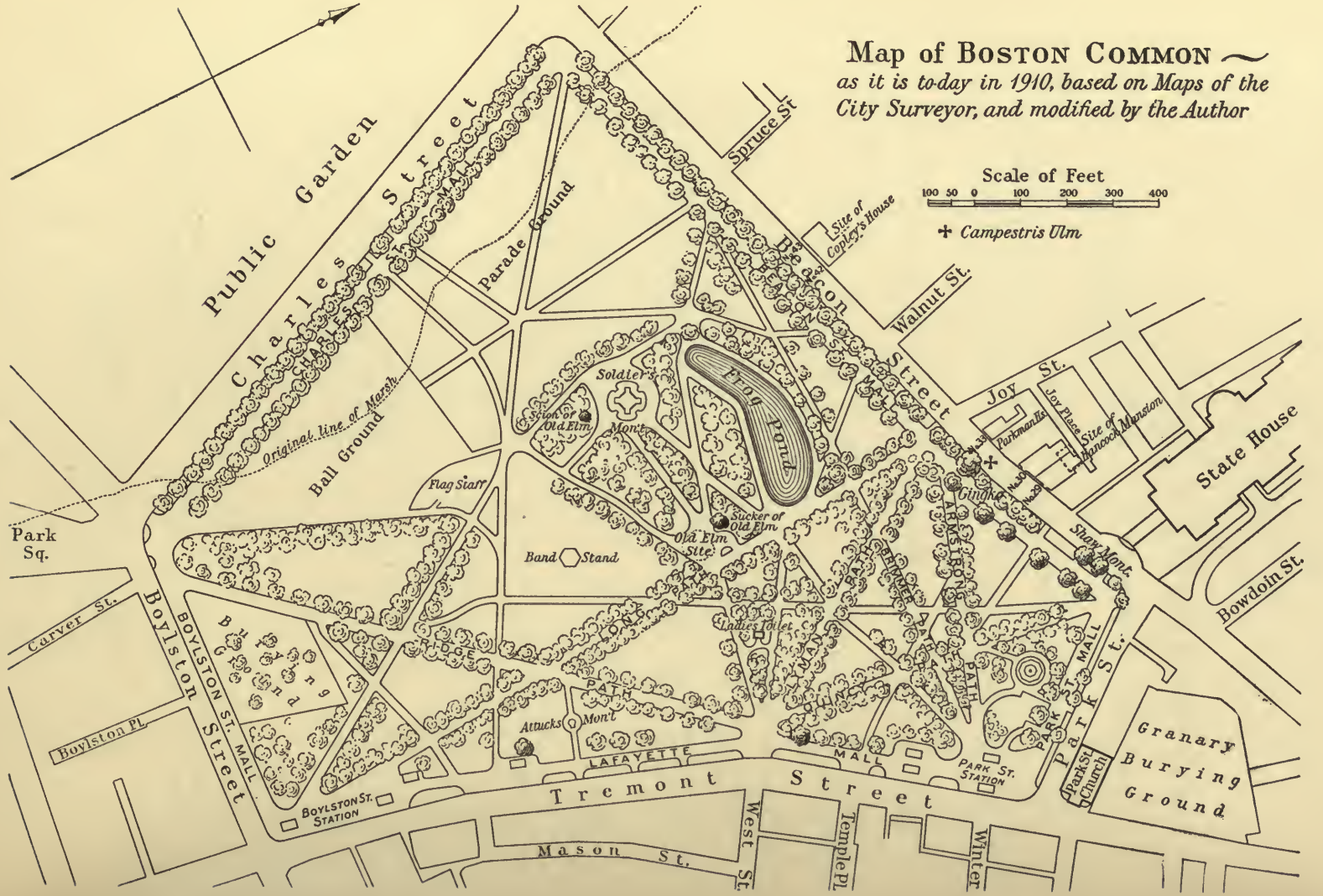
In the summer of 1854, Mayor Smith — he who introduced the squirrels that drove away the birds, and afterwards disappeared during the winter of 1864 — paid considerable attention to the Old Tree. He had it pruned and cared for, and placed around it an octagonal iron fence, which bears upon an oval tablet secured to the gate the following inscription:

THE OLD ELM

This tree has been standing
here for an unknown period.
It is believed to have existed
before the settlement of Boston,
being full grown in 1722, exhibited marks of old age in 1792, and
was nearly destroyed by a storm,
in 1832. Protected by an iron
enclosure in 1854.
J. V. C. Smith, Mayor.

When the Great Tree was measured in the spring of 1860, an offshoot was discovered, which had recently, in 1859, started from one of the roots on the westerly side of the main tree.[1] This shoot is still alive, measuring over twelve feet in height, and about thirteen inches in circumference a short distance above the ground, and appears to have received due attention from those who have since that time had charge of the Common. Just where it emerges from the soil, there is a considerable cavity in the old tree; and it would not be surprising if the young tree, vampire-like, were to grow and flourish on the life-sap of its parent; and if care is continued to be given to it, it may hereafter succeed its parent and become as noted in coming centuries as has its distinguished progenitor.

[1] *The young tree standing on the site of the Old Elm has recently been proved to be no relation of the old tree. On the map of Boston Common in* 1910 *are shown the locations of both a sucker and a scion of the Old Elm.*


Map of BOSTON COMMON
as it is to-day in 1910, based on Maps of the City Surveyor, and modified by the Author
Scale of Feet
100 50 0 100 200 300 400
+ Campestris Ulm
Public Garden
Charles Street
Parade Ground
Original line of Marsh
Ball Ground
Spruce St
Site of Copley's House
Beacon Street
Walnut St.
Joy St.
Joy Place
Parkman Hs.
Site of Hancock Manston
State House
Bowdoin St.
Frog Pond
Soldiers Mon't
Scion of Old Elm
Flag Staff
Sucker of Old Elm
Old Elm Site
Band Stand
Gingko
Shaw Mont.
Park Sq.
Carver St.
Boylston Street
Boylston Pl.
Burying Ground
Ladies Toilet
Attucks Mon't
Park St.
Park St. Church
Granary Burying Ground
Tremont Street
Mason St.
West St.
Temple Pl.
Winter
Boylston St. Station
Park St. Station
Lafayette Mall
Park St. Mall
Armstrong Path
Brimmer Path
Ridge Path
Long Path

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